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No.

WITHDRAWN

M n H I

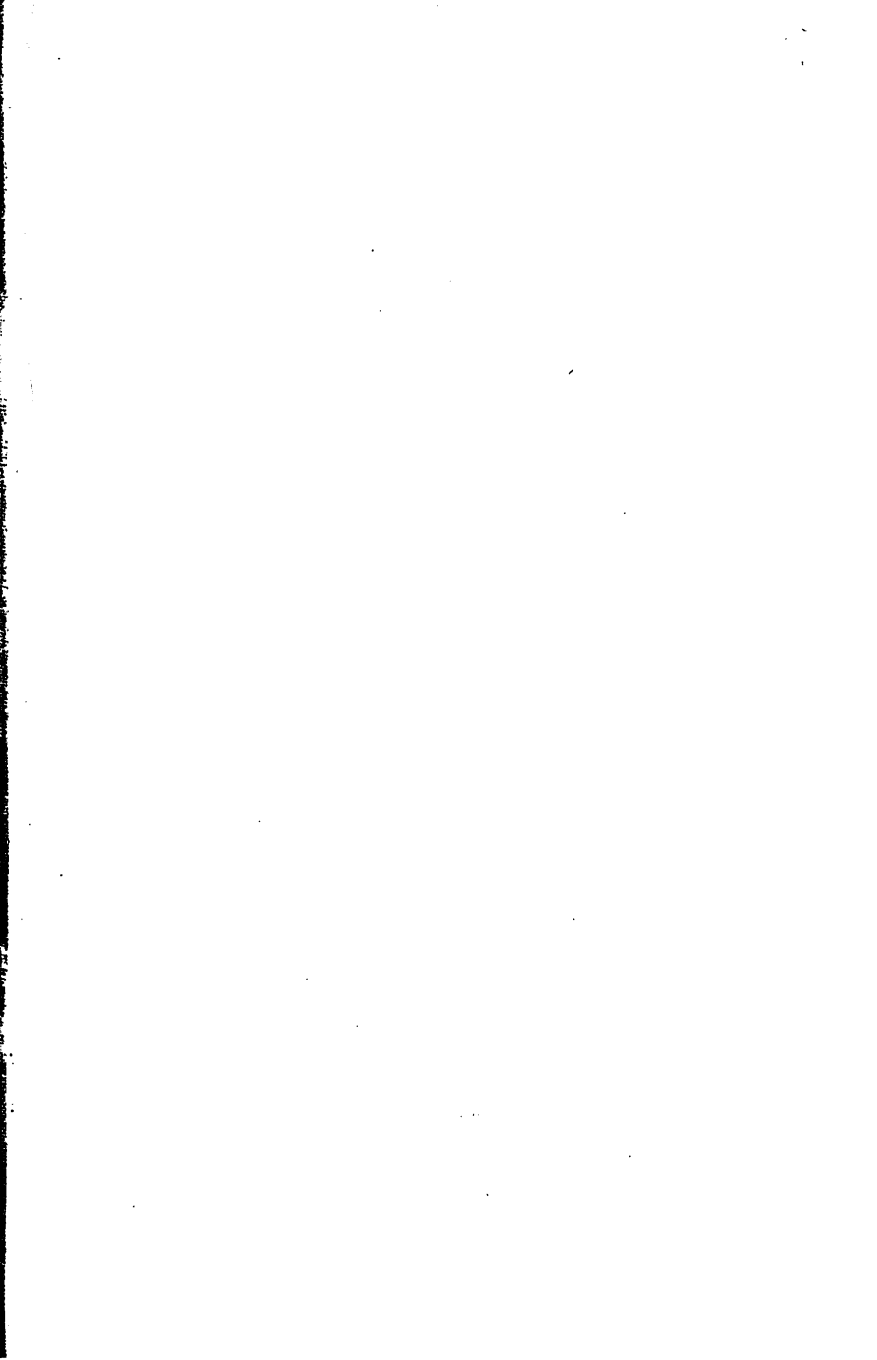


WITHDRAWN
M n H I

A GIFT. (UNBOUND)

FROM

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PLAYS
OF
SHAKESPEARE

SELECTED AND PREPARED FOR USE IN

SCHOOLS.

WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES.

BY
THE REV. HENRY N. HUDSON.

NUMBER II.
JULIUS CÆSAR.

BOSTON:
GINN AND HEATH.
1877.

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INTRODUCTION TO JULIUS CÆSAR

THIS tragedy was first printed in the folio of 1623, and with the text in so clear and sound a state, that editors have but little trouble about it, most of the errors being easily corrected. The date of the writing has been variously argued; some placing the work in the middle period of the author's labours, others among the latest. I was fully satisfied long ago, from the style alone, that it belonged with the former. But, as no clear contemporary notice or allusion had been produced, the question could not be determined. It is now pretty certain, however, that the play was written as early as 1601, Mr. Halliwell having lately produced the following from Weever's *Mirror of Martyrs*, which was printed that year:

"The many-headed multitude were drawn
By Brutus' speech, that Cæsar was ambitious:
When eloquent Mark Antony had shown
His virtues, who but Brutus then was vicious?"

As there is nothing in the history that could have suggested this, we can only ascribe it to some acquaintance with the play: so that the passage may be justly regarded as decisive of the question.

The historical matter of this play was taken from the *Lives of Julius Cæsar, of Brutus, and of Antony*, as set forth in Sir Thomas North's translation of *Plutarch*, first published in 1579. In nearly all the leading incidents the charming old Greek is minutely followed, though in divers cases those incidents are worked out with surpassing fertility of invention and art. Any abstract of the Plutarchian matter may well be spared, since it would be little else than a repetition, in prose, of what the drama gives in a much better shape. On the 15th of February, B. C. 44, the feast of Lupercalia was held, when the crown was offered to Cæsar by Antony. On the 15th of March following, Cæsar was slain. In November, B. C. 43, the Triumvirs, Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus, met on a small island near Bononia, and there made up their bloody proscription. The overthrow of Brutus and Cassius, near Philippi, took place in the Fall of the next year. So that the events of the drama cover a period of something over two years and a half.

Several critics of high judgment have found fault with the naming of this play, on the ground that Brutus, and not Cæsar, is the hero of it. It is indeed true that Brutus is the hero; nevertheless the play is, I think, rightly named, inasmuch as Cæsar is not only the subject but also the governing power throughout. He is the centre and spring-head of the entire action, giving law and shape to all that is said and done. This is manifestly true in what occurs before his death; and it is true in a still deeper sense afterwards, since his genius then becomes the Nemesis or retributive Providence, presiding over the whole course of the drama. Accordingly, the key-note of the play is rightly given by Brutus near the close:

"O, Julius Cæsar, thou art mighty yet!
Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords
In our own proper entrails."

The characterization is, I confess, in some parts not a little perplexing to me. I do not feel quite sure as to the temper of mind in which the Poet conceived some of the persons, or why he should have given them the aspect they wear in the play. For instance, Cæsar is far from being himself in these scenes hardly one of the speeches

put into his mouth can be regarded as historically characteristic; taking all of them together, they are little short of a downright caricature. As here represented, he is indeed little better than a grand, strutting piece of puff-paste; and when he speaks, it is very much in the style of a glorious vapourer and braggart, full of lofty airs and mock thunder; than which nothing could be further from the truth of the man, whose character, even in his faults, was as compact and solid as adamant, and at the same time as limber and ductile as the finest gold. Yet we have ample proof that the Poet understood "the mightiest Julius" thoroughly. He has many allusions to him scattered through his plays, all going to show that he regarded him as, what Merivale pronounces him, "the greatest name in history." And indeed it is clear from this play itself, that the Poet's course did not proceed at all from ignorance or misconception of the man. For it is remarkable that though Cæsar delivers himself so out of character, yet others, both foes and friends, deliver him much nearer the truth; so that, while we see almost nothing of him directly, we nevertheless get, upon the whole, a pretty just reflection of him. Especially, in the marvellous speeches of Antony, and in the later events of the drama, both his inward greatness and his right of mastership over the Roman world are fully vindicated. For in the play, as in history, Cæsar's blood just cements the empire which the conspirators thought to prevent. He proves indeed far mightier in death than in life; as if his spirit were become at once the guardian angel of his cause, and an avenging angel to his foes. And so it was in fact. For nothing did so much to set the people in love with royalty, both name and thing, as the reflection that their beloved Cæsar, the greatest of their national heroes, the crown and consummation of Roman genius and manhood, had been murdered for aspiring to it.

Now I have no doubt that Shakespeare perfectly understood the whole height and compass of Cæsar's vast and varied capacity. And I sometimes regret that he did not render him as he evidently saw him, inasmuch as he alone, perhaps, of all the men who ever wrote, could have given an adequate expression of that colossal man. And this seeming contradiction between Cæsar as known and Cæsar as rendered by him, is what, more than anything else in the drama, perplexes me. But there is, I think, a very refined, subtle, and peculiar irony pervading this, more than any other of the Poet's plays; not intended as such, indeed, by the speakers, but a sort of historic irony — the irony of Providence, so to speak, or, if you please, of fate; much the same as is implied in the proverb, "A haughty spirit goes before a fall." This irony crops out in many places. Thus we have Cæsar most blown with self-importance and godding it in the loftiest style when the daggers of the assassins are on the very point of leaping at him. So too, all along, we find Brutus most confident in those very things where he is most at fault, or acting like a man "most ignorant of what he's most assur'd;" as when he says that Antony "can do no more than Cæsar's arm when Cæsar's head is off." This, to be sure, is not meant ironically by him; but it is turned into irony by the fact that Antony soon tears the cause of the conspirators all to pieces with his tongue. So, again, of the passage where Cassius mockingly gods Cæsar: the subsequent course of events has the effect of inverting his mockery against himself; as much as to say, "You have made fine work with your ridding the world of great Cæsar: since your daggers pricked the gas out of him, you see what a grand humbug he was!"

As regards the historical aspect of the matter, I have met with nothing better than some remarks by Dr. Schmitz, a recent historian

of Rome. "The death of Cæsar," says he, "was an irreparable loss, not only to the Roman people, but to the whole civilized world; for the Republic was utterly ruined, and no earthly power could restore it. Cæsar's death involved the State in fresh struggles and civil wars for many a year, until in the end it fell again (and this was the best that, under the circumstances, could have happened to it) under the supremacy of Augustus, who had neither the talent, nor the will, nor the power, to carry out all the beneficial plans which his great-uncle had formed. It has been truly said, that the murder of Cæsar was the most senseless act the Romans ever committed. Had it been possible at all to restore the Republic, it would unavoidably have fallen into the hands of a most profligate aristocracy; who would have sought nothing but their own aggrandizement; would have demoralized the people still more; and would have established their own greatness upon the ruins of their country. It is only necessary to recollect the latter years of the Republic, the depravity and corruption of the ruling classes, the scenes of violence and bloodshed which constantly occurred in the streets of Rome, to render it evident to every one that peace and security could not be restored, except by the strong hand of a sovereign; and the Roman world would have been fortunate indeed, if it had submitted to the mild and beneficent sway of Cæsar."

To this may be fitly added Merivale's summing-up of Cæsar's character. "While other illustrious men have been reputed great for their excellence in some one department of human genius, it was declared by the concurrent voice of antiquity, that Cæsar was excellent in all. He had genius, understanding, memory, taste, reflection, industry, and exactness. *He was great, repeats a modern writer, in every thing he undertook; as a captain, a statesman, a lawgiver, a jurist, an orator, a poet, an historian, a grammarian, a mathematician, and an architect.* The secret of his manifold excellence was discovered by Pliny in the unparalleled energy of his intellectual powers, which he could devote without distraction to several objects at once, or rush at any moment from one occupation to another with the abruptness and rapidity of lightning. Cæsar could be writing and reading, dictating and listening, all at the same time; he was wont to occupy four amanuenses at once; and had been known, on occasions, to employ as many as seven together. And, as if to complete the picture of the most perfect specimen of human ability, we are assured that in all the exercises of the camp his vigour and skill were not less conspicuous. He fought at the most perilous moments in the ranks of the soldiers; he could manage his charger without the use of reins; and he saved his life at Alexandria by his address in the art of swimming."

From all which it may well be thought that Cæsar was too great for the hero of a drama, since his greatness, if brought forward in full measure, would leave no room for any thing else, at least would preclude any proper dramatic balance and equipoise. It was only as a sort of underlying potency, or a force withdrawn into the background that his presence was compatible with that harmony and reciprocity of several characters which a well-ordered drama requires. At all events, it is pretty clear that, where he was, such figures as Brutus and Cassius could never be very considerable, save as his assassins. They would not have been heard of in our day, if they had not "struck the foremost man of all this world." Now, in the drama, whatever there was in Brutus and Cassius that was noble, and there was much that was noble in them, has a full and fair showing; and if Cæsar is sacrificed to them, the reason may be that there was more danger of doing injustice to them than to him, inasmuch as Cæsar could better take care of himself.

The honesty of Brutus and the ability of Cassius are very strong features in the drama. The latter is indeed much the worse man, but much the better conspirator. Accordingly, in every case where Brutus crosses him, Brutus is wrong, and he is right, — right, that is if success be their aim. Cassius judges, and rightly, I think, that the end should give law to the means; and that "the honorable men whose daggers have stabb'd Cæsar" should not be hampered much with conscientious scruples. Still Brutus overawes him by his moral energy and elevation of character, and by the open-faced rectitude and purity of his principles. The character of Brutus is indeed full of beauty and sweetness. In all the relations of life he is upright, gentle, and pure; of a sensitiveness and delicacy of principle that cannot bosom the slightest stain; his mind enriched and fortified with the best extractions of philosophy; a man adorned with all the virtues which, in public and private, at home and in the circle of friends, win respect and charm the heart. Being such a man, of course he could only do what he did under some sort of delusion. And so indeed it is. Yet this very delusion serves, apparently, to enoble and beautify him, as it takes him and works upon him through his virtues. At heart he is a real patriot, every inch of him. But his patriotism, besides being somewhat hidebound with Patrician pride, is of the speculative kind, and dwells, where his whole character has been chiefly formed, in a world of poetical and philosophical ideals. He is an enthusiastic student of books. And what a delightful, what a noble creature, his Portia is! How little we see of her, yet how complete is our impression of her character! Well might the poet Campbell say, — "For the picture of that wedded pair, at once august and tender, human nature and the dignity of conjugal faith are indebted." I am not sure, however, but the boy Lucius is the best character in the play. So loving and so dutiful, so careful for his master and so careless of himself, he is indeed a mighty dear little fellow! Shakespeare's great soul was especially at home with children.

As a whole, this play does not, to my mind, stand among the Poet's masterpieces. But it abounds in particular scenes and passages fraught with the highest virtue of his genius. Among these may be specially mentioned the second scene of the first Act, where Cassius lays the egg of the conspiracy in Brutus' mind, warmed with such a wrappage of instigation as to assure its being quickly hatched. Also the first scene of the second Act, unfolding the birth of the conspiracy, and winding up with the interview, so charged with domestic glory, of Brutus and Portia. The oration of Antony in Cæsar's funeral is such an interfusion of art and passion as realizes the very perfection of its kind. Adapted at once to the comprehension of the lowest mind and the delectation of the highest, and running its pathos into the very quick of them that hear it, it tells with terrible effect on the people; and when it is done, we feel that Cæsar's bleeding wounds are mightier than ever his genius and fortune were. The quarrel of Brutus and Cassius is deservedly celebrated. Dr. Johnson thought it "somewhat cold and unaffecting." Coleridge thought otherwise. "I know," says he, "of no part of *Shakespeare* that more impresses on me the belief of his genius being superhuman, than this scene." I am content to err with Coleridge here, if it be an error. But there is nothing in the play that seems to me touched more divinely than the brief scene of Brutus and his boy Lucius, in Act iv. The gentle and loving nature of Brutus is there out in its noblest and sweetest transpiration.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

JULIUS CÆSAR.		FLAVIUS and MARULLUS, Tribunes.
OCTAVIUS CÆSAR,	} Triumvirs, after his Death.	ARTEMIDORUS, a Sophist of Onides.
MARCUS ANTONIUS,		A Soothsayer.
M. ÆMIL. LEPIDUS,		CINNA, a Poet. Another Poet.
CICERO, PUBLIUS, POPILIUS LENA, Sen- ators.		LUCILIUS, TITINIUS, MESSALA, young CATO, and VOLUMNIUS, Friends to Brutus and Cassius.
MARCUS BRUTUS,	} Conspirators against Cæsar.	VARRO, CLITUS, CLAUDIUS, STRATO, LUCIUS, DARDANIUS, Servants to Brutus.
CASSIUS,		PINDARUS, Servant to Cassius
CASCA,		CALPURNIA, Wife to Cæsar.
TREBONIUS,		PORTIA, Wife to Brutus.
LIGARIUS,		
DECIUS BRUTUS,		
METELLUS CIMBER,		
CINNA,		

Senators, Citizens, Guards, Attendants, &c.

SCENE, during a great part of the Play, at Rome; afterwards at Sardis; and near Philippi.

ACT I. SCENE I. *Rome. A Street.*

Enter FLAVIUS, MARULLUS, and a Throng of Citizens.

Flav. HENCE! home, you idle creatures, get you home!
Is this a holiday? What! know you not,
Being mechanical,¹ you ought not walk²
Upon a labouring-day without the sign
Of your profession? — Speak, what trade art thou?

1 Cit. Why, sir, a carpenter.

Mar. Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?
What dost thou with thy best apparel on? —
You, sir; what trade are you?

2 Cit. Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman, I am but,
as you would say, a cobbler.

Mar. But what trade art thou? Answer me directly.³

¹ Shakespeare uses certain adjectives in the singular with the sense of the plural noun; as *mechanical* here for *mechanics*. So, in *Hamlet*, ii. 2: "Twas caviare to the general." The sense in the text is, "Know you not that, *being mechanics*, you ought not," &c.

² In infinitive verbs the Poet sometimes omits the *to*, where the verse so carries it. Thus, in *The Merchant of Venice*, i. 3: "Whose own hard dealing teaches them suspect the thoughts of others."

³ *Cobbler*, it seems, was used of a coarse workman, or a *botcher*, in any mechanical trade. So that the Cobbler's answer does not give the information required.

2 *Cit.* A trade, sir, that I hope I may use with a safe conscience; which is indeed, sir, a mender of bad soles.

Mar. What trade, thou knave? thou naughty knave, what trade?

2 *Cit.* Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with me: yet, if you be out, sir, I can mend you.⁴

Mar. What mean'st thou by that? Mend me, thou saucy fellow!

2 *Cit.* Why, sir, cobble you.

Flav. Thou art a cobbler, art thou?

2 *Cit.* Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the awl: I meddle with no tradesman's matters, nor women's matters, but with all.⁵ I am indeed, sir, a surgeon to old shoes; when they are in great danger, I re-cover them. As proper men as ever trod upon neat's-leather have gone upon my handy-work.⁶

Flav. But wherefore art not in thy shop to-day? Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

2 *Cit.* Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes, to get myself into more work. But indeed, sir, we make holiday, to see Cæsar, and to rejoice in his triumph.

Mar. Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home? What tributaries follow him to Rome,
To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!
O, you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft
Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
Your infants in your arms,⁷ and there have sat
The live-long day, with patient expectation,
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome:
And when you saw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an universal shout,

⁴ Of course there is a play upon the two senses of *out* here. To be *out* with a man is to be *at odds* with him; to be *out at the toes* is to need a mending of one's shoes.

⁵ The original reads, "but *withal*;" which modern editions generally change into *with awl*. In Shakespeare's quibbles, it is often difficult to tell which word should be used; and, as they were meant rather for the ear than the eye, it makes little difference.

⁶ *Proper* is commonly used by Shakespeare for *handsome* or *goodly*. See page 194, note 5. So in *Hebrews* xi. 23, it is said that the parents of Moses hid him "because they saw he was a proper child." — *Neat* was applied to all cattle of the bovine genus, such as bulls, cows, and oxen. So, in *The Winter's Tale*, i. 2: "The steer, the heifer, and the calf, are all call'd *neat*."

⁷ What is called the nominative independent: "Your infants *being* in your arms."

That Tyber trembled underneath her banks,⁸
 To hear the replication of your sounds
 Made in her concave shores?
 And do you now put on your best attire?
 And do you now cull out a holiday?
 And do you now strew flowers in his way
 That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?⁹
 Be gone!

Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
 Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
 That needs must light on this ingratitude.¹⁰

Flav. Go, go, good countrymen; and, for this fault,
 Assemble all the poor men of your sort;
 Draw them to Tyber banks, and weep your tears
 Into the channel, till the lowest stream
 Do kiss the most exalted shores of all. — *[Exeunt Citizens]*
 See, wher their basest metal be not mov'd!¹¹
 They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness.
 Go you down that way towards the Capitol;
 This way will I. Disrobe the images,
 If you do find them deck'd with ceremony.¹²

Mar. May we do so?
 You know it is the feast of Lupercal.¹³

⁸ The Tyber being always personified as a god, the feminine gender is here, strictly speaking, improper. Milton says: "The river of bliss rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber streams." But he is speaking of the water, and not of its presiding power or genius. Drayton describes the presiding powers of the rivers of England as females; Spenser more classically represents them as males.

⁹ The reference is to the great battle of Munda, in Spain, which took place in the Fall of the preceding year. Cæsar was now celebrating his fifth triumph, which was in honour of his final victory over the Pompeian faction. Cnæus and Sextus, the two sons of Pompey the Great, were leaders in that battle, and Cnæus perished. — *Flowers*, in the preceding line, is a dissyllable. The Poet uses this, and also various other words of like form, *power, dower, bower*, &c., as one or two syllables indifferently, to suit his verse.

¹⁰ It is evident from the opening scene, that Shakespeare, even in dealing with classical subjects, laughed at the classic fear of putting the ludicrous and sublime into juxtaposition. After the low and farcical jests of the saucy cobbler, the eloquence of Marullus "springs upwards like a pyramid of fire."
 — *Campbell*.

¹¹ *Wher* is occasionally used by the Poet as a contraction of *whether*. The idea is, that even such stupid souls as these have yet the grace to be ashamed of their conduct.

¹² These images were the busts and statues of Cæsar, ceremoniously decked with scarfs and badges in honour of his triumph.

¹³ This festival, held in honour of Lupercus, the Roman Pan, fell on the 15th of February, which month was so named from *Februus*, a surname of the god. Lupercus was, primarily, the god of the shepherds, said to have been so called because he kept off the wolves. His wife Luperca was the deified she-wolf that suckled Romulus. The festival, in its original idea, was meant for religious expiation and purification, February being at that time the last month of the year.

Flav. It is no matter; let no images
 Be hung with Cæsar's trophies.¹⁴ I'll about,
 And drive away the vulgar from the streets:
 So do you too, where you perceive them thick.
 These growing feathers pluck'd from Cæsar's wing,
 Will make him fly an ordinary pitch;
 Who else would soar above the view of men,
 And keep us all in servile fearfulness.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Same. A Public Place.*

Enter, in Procession with Music, CÆSAR; ANTONY, for the Course; CALPURNIA, PORTIA, DECIUS, CICERO, BRUTUS, CASSIUS, and CASCA; a great Crowd following, among them a Soothsayer.

Cæs. Calpurnia,—

Casca. Peace, ho! Cæsar speaks.

[*Music ceases.*]

Cæs. Calpurnia,—

Cal. Here, my lord.

Cæs. Stand you directly in Antonius' way,
 When he doth run his course.¹—Antonius,—

Ant. Cæsar, my lord?

Cæs. Forget not, in your speed, Antonius,
 To touch Calpurnia; for our elders say,
 The barren, touched in this holy chase,
 Shake off their sterile curse.²

Ant.

I shall remember:

When Cæsar says *Do this*, it is perform'd.

Cæs. Set on; and leave no ceremony out.

[*Music.*]

Sooth. Cæsar!

Cæs. Ha! who calls?

Casca. Bid every noise be still.—Peace yet again!

[*Music ceases.*]

Cæs. Who is it in the press that calls on me?

¹⁴ "Cæsar's trophies" are the scarfs and badges mentioned in note 12; as appears in the next scene, where it is said that the Tribunes "are put to silence for pulling scarfs off Cæsar's images."

¹ Marcus Antonius was at this time Consul, as Cæsar himself also was. Each Roman gens had its own priesthood, and also its peculiar religious rites. The flamens, or priests, of the Julian gens (so named from Iulus the son of Æneas) had lately been advanced to the same rank with those of the god Lupercus; and Antony was at this time at their head. It was probably as chief flamen of the Julian house that he officiated on this occasion in "the holy course."

² It was an old custom at these festivals for the flamens, all naked except a girdle about the loins, to run through the streets of the city, waving in the hand a thong of goat's hide, and striking with it such women as offered themselves for the blow, in the belief that this would prevent or avert 'the sterile curse.'

I hear a tongue, shriller than all the music,
Cry *Cæsar!* Speak; Cæsar is turn'd to hear.

Sooth. Beware the ides of March.

Cæs. What man is that?

Bru. A soothsayer bids you beware the ides of March.³

Cæs. Set him before me; let me see his face.

Cass. Fellow, come from the throng; look upon Cæsar.

Cæs. What say'st thou to me now? speak once again

Sooth. Beware the ides of March.

Cæs. He is a dreamer; let us leave him:— Pass.

[*Sennet. Exeunt all but BRUTUS and CASSIUS.*]

Cass. Will you go see the order of the course?

Bru. Not I.

Cass. I pray you, do.

Bru. I am not gamesome: I do lack some part
Of that quick spirit that is in Antony.
Let me not hinder, Cassius, your desires;
I'll leave you.

Cass. Brutus, I do observe you now of late:
I have not from your eyes that gentleness
And show of love as I was wont to have:⁴
You bear too stubborn and too strange a hand
Over your friend that loves you.

Bru. Cassius,
Be not deceiv'd: if I have veil'd my look,
I turn the trouble of my countenance
Merely upon myself. Vexed I am
Of late with passions of some difference,
Conceptions only proper to myself,
Which give some soil, perhaps, to my behaviours
But let not therefore my good friends be griev'd,
(Among which number, Cassius, be you one,)
Nor construe any further my neglect,⁵

³ Coleridge has a remark on this line, which, whether true to the subject or not, is very characteristic of the writer: "If my ear does not deceive me, the metre of this line was meant to express that sort of mild philosophic contempt, characterising Brutus even in his first casual speech." The metrical analysis of the line is, an Iamb, two Anapaests, and two Iambes.

⁴ The demonstratives *this*, *that*, and *such*, and also the relatives *which*, *that* and *as*, had not become fully differentiated in the Poet's time, and so were often used interchangeably. So, a little later in this scene: "Under these hard conditions as this time is like to lay upon us." See page 224, note 20. This man, Caius Cassius Longinus, had married Junia, a sister of Brutus. Both had lately stood for the chief Prætorship of the city, and Brutus, through Cæsar's favour, had won it; though Cassius was at the same time elected one of the sixteen Prætors or judges of the city. This is said to have produced a coldness between Brutus and Cassius, so that they did not speak to each other, till this extraordinary flight of patriotism brought them together.

⁵ *Construe* is, I believe, always used by Shakespeare with the first syllable long.

Than that poor Brutus, with himself at war,
Forgets the shows of love to other men.

Cass. Then, Brutus, I have much mistook your passion;
By means whereof⁶ this breast of mine hath buried
Thoughts of great value, worthy cogitations.
Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?

Bru. No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself
But by reflection from some other thing.⁷

Cass. 'Tis just:
And it is very much lamented, Brutus,
That you have no such mirror as will turn
Your hidden worthiness into your eye,
That you might see your shadow. I have heard,
Where many of the best respect in Rome,⁸ —
Except immortal Cæsar! — speaking of Brutus,
And groaning underneath this age's yoke,
Have wish'd that noble Brutus had his eyes.

Bru. Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius,
That you would have me seek into myself
For that which is not in me?⁹

Cass. Therefore, good Brutus, be prepar'd to hear:
And, since you know you cannot see yourself
So well as by reflection, I, your glass,
Will modestly discover to yourself
That of yourself which you yet know not of.
And be not jealous on me,¹⁰ gentle Brutus:
Were I a common laughèr, or did use
To stale with ordinary oaths my love¹¹
To every new protester; if you know
That I do fawn on men, and hug them hard,
And after scandal them; or if you know
That I profess myself, in banqueting,
To all the rout,¹² then hold me dangerous.

[*Flourish and Shout.*]

⁶ *Means* was sometimes used in the sense of *cause* or *reason*. *Whereof* refers to the preceding clause.

⁷ By an image or "shadow" reflected from a mirror, or from water, or some polished surface.

⁸ *Respect* is very often used by the Poet for *consideration*. See page 101, note 16. — The parenthetical clause, "except immortal Cæsar," is very emphatic, and intensely ironical.

⁹ Brutus likes to hear Cassius talk in that strain, and here moves him to go on, and amplify the matter.

¹⁰ *On* and *of* were used indifferently in such cases.

¹¹ To *stale* is to *make common*, to *prostitute*. The word is often used in that sense.

¹² The order, according to the sense, is, "if you know that, in banqueting, I profess myself to all the rout." — To make his flattery work the better, Cassius here assures the "gentle Brutus" that he scorns to flatter, that he never speaks any thing but austere truth, and that he is extremely select in his friendships.

Br. What means this shouting? I do fear the people
Choose Cæsar for their king.

Cass. Ay, do you fear it?
Then must I think you would not have it so.

Br. I would not, Cassius; yet I love him well.
But wherefore do you hold me here so long?
What is it that you would impart to me?
If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honour in one eye and death i' the other,
And I will look on both indifferently;
For let the gods so speed me as I love
The name of honour more than I fear death.¹³

Cass. I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,
As well as I do know your outward favour.
Well, honour is the subject of my story.
I cannot tell what you and other men
Think of this life; but, for my single self,
I had as lief not be as live to be
In awe of such a thing as I myself.
I was born free as Cæsar; so were you:
We both have fed as well; and we can both
Endure the Winter's cold as well as he:
For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
The troubled Tyber chafing with her shores,
Cæsar said to me, *Dar'st thou, Cassius, now
Leap in with me into this angry flood,
And swim to yonder point?* Upon the word,
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in,
And bade him follow: so indeed he did.
The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy;¹⁴
But, ere we could arrive the point propos'd,¹⁵
Cæsar cried, *Help me, Cassius, or I sink!*
I, as Æneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder

¹³ There appears to be some confusion here; though I am not clear whether it be the Poet's or the speaker's. Brutus has just said that he "will look on both *indifferently*," and he now says a thing not consistent with that. Warburton would read *death* instead of *both*; which would remove the incoherence. But probably Brutus' thought changes somewhat while he is in the act of expressing it. For he does not seem to have a very firm mental grip: his head is none of the clearest. This is not the only instance where the latter end of his thought seems to forget the beginning.

¹⁴ This mode of speech was not uncommon. The sense is, "with contending or controverting hearts." For instances of similar expression see page 129, note 8.

¹⁵ The verb *arrive*, in its active sense, according to its etymology was formerly used for *to approach*, or *come near*.

The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tyber
 Did I the tired Cæsar: and this man
 Is now become a god; and Cassius is
 A wretched creature, and must bend his body,
 If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.
 He had a fever when he was in Spain;¹⁶
 And when the fit was on him I did mark
 How he did shake: 'tis true, this god did shake:
 His coward lips did from their colour fly;¹⁷
 And that same eye, whose bend doth awe the world,
 Did lose his lustre. I did hear him groan:
 Ay, and that tongue of his, that bade the Romans
 Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,
 Alas, it cried, *Give me some drink, Titinius,*
 As a sick girl. — Ye gods, it doth amaze me,
 A man of such a feeble temper should¹⁸
 So get the start of the majestic world,
 And bear the palm alone. [Shout. Flourish]

Br. Another general shout!

I do believe that these applauses are
 For some new honours that are heap'd on Cæsar.

Cass. Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world,
 Like a Colossus;¹⁹ and we petty men
 Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
 To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
 Men at some time are masters of their fates:
 The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
 But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

¹⁶ Cæsar had three several campaigns in Spain at different periods of his life, and it does not appear which of them is here referred to. He was somewhat subject to epileptic fits, especially in his later years, as Napoleon also is said to have been. *Fever* was used for *sickness*, generally, and not merely for what we call a fever.

¹⁷ The image, very bold, somewhat forced, and not altogether happy, is that of a cowardly soldier running away from his flag. — In "did lose his lustre," *his* is used for *its*, the latter not being then an accepted word. See page 103, note 24.

¹⁸ *Temper* is here used nearly in the sense of *constitution* or *temperament*. This mighty man, in fact, notwithstanding his fiery energy and lightning-like swiftness of thought and act, was of a rather fragile make, with an almost feminine delicacy of texture. Cicero, who did not love him at all in one of his Letters applies to him a Greek word, the same that is used for *miracle* or *wonder* in the *New Testament*: the English of the passage being, "This miracle (monster?) is a thing of terrible energy, swiftness, diligence."

¹⁹ Observe the force of *narrow* here; as if Cæsar were grown so enormously big that even the world seemed a little thing under him. Some while before this, the Senate had erected a bronze statue of Cæsar, standing on a globe, and inscribed to "Cæsar the Demigod;" which inscription, however, Cæsar had erased. — The original Colossus was a bronze statue a hundred and twenty feet high, set up astride a part of the harbour at Rhodes, so that ships passed "under its huge legs." It was one of the seven wonders of the world.

Brutus and *Cæsar*: What should be in that *Cæsar*?
 Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
 Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
 Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
 Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with them,
Brutus will start a spirit as soon as *Cæsar*.²⁰
 Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
 Upon what meat doth this our *Cæsar* feed,
 That he is grown so great? Age, thou art sham'd!
 Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
 When went there by an age, since the great flood,²¹
 But it was fam'd with more than with one man?
 When could they say, till now, that talk'd of Rome,
 That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?²²
 Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,
 When there is in it but one only man.
 O, you and I have heard our fathers say
 There was a *Brutus* once²³ that would have brook'd
 Th' eternal Devil to keep his state in Rome,
 As easily as a king!

Bru. That you do love me, I am nothing jealous;
 What you would work me to, I have some aim:²⁴
 How I have thought of this, and of these times,
 I shall recount hereafter; for this present,
 I would not, so with love I might entreat you,
 Be any further mov'd. What you have said,
 I will consider; what you have to say,
 I will with patience hear; and find a time
 Both meet to hear and answer such high things.
 Till then, my noble friend, chew upon this:²⁵
Brutus had rather be a villager
 Than to repute himself a son of Rome

²⁰ The allusion is to the old custom of muttering certain names, supposed to have in them "the might of magic spells," in raising or conjuring up spirits. — *Brutus* and *Cæsar* are here printed in *Italic*, to show that *Cassius* is referring to the magical power of the names, and not to the men.

²¹ By this a Roman would of course mean Deucalion's flood, not Noah's.

²² The original has *walks* instead of *walls*. In the next line there is a play upon the words *Rome* and *room*, which may have been more consonous in the Poet's time than they are now.

²³ Alluding to Lucius Junius Brutus, who bore a leading part in driving out Tarquin the Proud, and in turning the Kingdom into a Republic. Afterwards, as Consul, he condemned his own sons to death for attempting to restore the Kingdom. The Marcus Junius Brutus of the play supposed himself to be lineally descended from him. His mother, Servilia, also derived her lineage from Servilius Ahala, who slew Spurius Mælius for aspiring to royalty. Merivale justly remarks that "the name of Brutus forced its possessor into prominence as soon as royalty began to be discussed."

²⁴ To *aim* is to *guess*. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 1: "I aim'd so near when I suppos'd you lov'd." *Jealous* was often used in the sense of *doubtful*.

²⁵ To *chew* is literally the same as to *ruminate*. See page 81 note 6.

Under these hard conditions as this time
Is like to lay upon us.

Cass. I am glad that my weak words
Have struck but thus much show of fire from Brutus.

Bru. The games are done, and Cæsar is returning.

Cass. As they pass by, pluck Casca by the sleeve;
And he will, after his sour fashion, tell you
What hath proceeded worthy note to-day.

Re-enter CÆSAR and his Train.

Bru. I will do so. — But, look you, Cassius,
The angry spot doth glow on Cæsar's brow,
And all the rest look like a chidden train:
Calpurnia's cheek is pale; and Cicero
Looks with such ferret and such fiery eyes²⁶
As we have seen him in the Capitol,
Being cross'd in conference by some Senator.

Cass. Casca will tell us what the matter is.

Cæs. Antonius, —

Ant. Cæsar?

Cæs. Let me have men about me that are fat;
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights:
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look;
He thinks too much: such men are dangerous.²⁷

Ant. Fear him not, Cæsar; he's not dangerous;
He is a noble Roman, and well given.²⁸

Cæs. 'Would he were fatter! but I fear him not:
Yet, if my name were liable to fear,
I do not know the man I should avoid
So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much;
He is a great observer, and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men: he loves no plays,
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music:²⁹
Seldom he smiles; and smiles in such a sort
As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit
That could be mov'd to smile at any thing.

²⁶ The ferret is a very ferocious little animal of the weasel kind, noted for its fire-red eyes. — The angry spot on Cæsar's brow, Calpurnia's pale cheek, and Cicero spouting fire from his eyes as when kindled by opposition in the Senate, make an exceedingly vivid picture.

²⁷ So in North's *Plutarch, Life of Julius Cæsar*: "When Cæsar's friends complained unto him of Antonius and Dolabella, that they pretended some mischief towards him, he answered them, 'As for those fat men, and smooth combed heads, I never reckon of them; but these pale visaged and carion leane people, I feare them most; meaning Brutus and Cassius.'"

²⁸ *Well given* is *well disposed*.

²⁹ This note of Cassius naturally draws to him what is said of "the man that hath no music in himself," in *The Merchant of Venice*, v. 1.

Such men as he be never at heart's ease
Whiles they behold a greater than themselves ;
And therefore are they very dangerous.
I rather tell thee what is to be fear'd
Than what I fear, for always I am Cæsar.
Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf,³⁰
And tell me truly what thou think'st of him.

[*Exeunt CÆSAR and his Train.* CASCA *stays.*

Casca. You pull'd me by the cloak: would you speak with me?

Bru. Ay, Casca; tell us what hath chanc'd to-day,
That Cæsar looks so sad.

Casca. Why, you were with him, were you not?

Bru. I should not, then, ask Casca what had chanc'd.

Casca. Why, there was a crown offer'd him; and being offer'd him, he put it by with the back of his hand, thus; and then the people fell a-shouting.

Bru. What was the second noise for?

Casca. Why, for that too.

Cass. They shouted thrice: what was the last cry for?

Casca. Why, for that too.

Bru. Was the crown offer'd him thrice?

Casca. Ay, marry, was't, and he put it by thrice, every time gentler than other; and at every putting-by mine honest neighbours shouted.

Cass. Who offer'd him the crown?

Casca. Why, Antony.

Bru. Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca.

Casca. I can as well be hang'd, as tell the manner of it: it was mere foolery; I did not mark it. I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown;—yet 'twas not a crown neither, 'twas one of these coronets;—and, as I told you, he put it by once: but, for all that, to my thinking, he would fain have had it. Then he offered it to him again; then he put it by again: but, to my thinking, he was very loth to lay his fingers off it. And then he offered it the third time; he put it the third time by; and still, as he refus'd it, the rabblement shouted, and clapp'd their chapp'd hands, and threw up their sweaty night-caps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Cæsar refus'd the crown, that it had almost choked Cæsar; for he swooned, and fell down at it: and, for mine own part, I durst not laugh, for fear of opening my lips and receiving the bad air.

Cass. But, soft! I pray you. What, did Cæsar swoon?

³⁰ This is one of the little touches of invention that so often impart a fact-like vividness to the Poet's scenes.

Casca. He fell down in the market-place, and foam'd at mouth, and was speechless.

Bru. 'Tis very like; he hath the falling-sickness.

Cass. No, Cæsar hath it not; but you, and I, And honest Casca, we have the falling-sickness.³¹

Casca. I know not what you mean by that; but I am sure Cæsar fell down. If the tag-rag people did not clap him and hiss him, according as he pleas'd and displeas'd them, as they use to do the players in the theatre, I am no true man.

Bru. What said he when he came unto himself?

Casca. Marry, before he fell down, when he perceiv'd the common herd was glad he refus'd the crown, he pluck'd me ope his doublet, and offer'd them his throat to cut: an I had been a man of any occupation,³² if I would not have taken him at a word, I would I might go to Hell among the rogues:—and so he fell. When he came to himself again he said, if he had done or said any thing amiss, he desir'd their worships to think it was his infirmity.³³ Three or four wenches, where I stood, cried, *Alas, good soul!* and forgave him with all their hearts. But there's no heed to be taken of them: if Cæsar had stabb'd their mothers, they would have done no less.

Bru. And, after that, he came thus sad away?

Casca. Ay.

Cass. Did Cicero say any thing?

Casca. Ay, he spoke Greek.

Cass. To what effect?

Casca. Nay, an I tell you that, I'll ne'er look you i' the face again: but those that understood him smil'd at one another and shook their heads; but, for mine own part, it was Greek to me.³⁴ I could tell you more news too: Marullus and Flavius, for pulling scarfs off Cæsar's images, are put to silence. Fare you well: There was more foolery yet, if I could remember it.

Cass. Will you sup with me to-night, Casca?

³¹ Meaning the disease of "standing prostrate" before Cæsar. *Falling-sickness* or *falling-evil* was the English name for epilepsy in Shakespeare's time.

³² Men of *occupation* are mechanics or artizans. So, in *Coriolanus*, iv. 6: "You have made good work, you and your apron-men; you that stood so much upon the voice of *occupation*, and the breath of garlic-eaters."

³³ This is historical, and is thus given in North's *Plutarch*: "Thereupon also Cæsar rising departed home, and, tearing open his dublet collar, making his neck bare, he cried out aloud to his friends, that his throat was readie to offer to any man that would come and cut it. Notwithstanding, it is reported that afterwards, to excuse his folly, he imputed it to his disease, saying that their wits are not perfit which have this disease of the falling evil."

³⁴ A charming invention. Cicero had a long, sharp tongue, and was mighty fond of using it; and nothing was more natural, supposing him to have been present, than that he should snap off some keen sententious sayings; prudently veiling them however in a foreign language from all but those who might safely understand them.

Casca. No, I am promis'd forth.

Cass. Will you dine with me to-morrow?

Casca. Ay, if I be alive, and your mind hold, and your dinner worth the eating.

Cass. Good; I will expect you.

Casca. Do so: Farewell both. [*Exit CASCA.*

Bru. What a blunt fellow is this grown to be!³⁵
He was quick mettle when he went to school.

Cass. So is he now, in execution
Of any bold or noble enterprise,
However he puts on this tardy form.
This rudeness is a sauce to his good wit,
Which gives men stomach to digest his words
With better appetite.

Bru. And so it is. For this time I will leave you:
To-morrow, if you please to speak with me,
I will come home to you; or, if you will,
Come home to me, and I will wait for you.

Cass. I will do so: till then, think of the world.—

[*Exit BRUTUS.*

Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet, I see,
Thy honourable metal may be wrought
From that it is dispos'd:³⁶ therefore 'tis meet
That noble minds keep ever with their likes;
For who so firm that cannot be seduc'd?
Cæsar doth bear me hard,³⁷ but he loves Brutus:
If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius,
He should not humour me.³⁸ I will this night,

³⁵ *Blunt* here means, apparently, *dull* or *slow*; alluding to the "tardy form" Casca has just "put on" in winding so long about the matter before coming to the point.

³⁶ Wrought from *what* it is dispos'd to. I am not clear whether Cassius here refers to the effect of his own talk, or to that of Cæsar's treatment, in warping Brutus from his natural bent. He evidently regards Brutus as a noble putty-head, and goes on to take order for moulding him accordingly.

³⁷ To *bear me hard* is, in old English, to *have a grudge against me*, or to *think ill of me*. The phrase occurs twice afterwards in the same sense in this play.

³⁸ To *humour* a man, as the term is here used, is to turn and wind and work him, by playing on his passions. There is some obscurity in the passage, it being not quite clear whether the last *he* refers to Cassius or to Cæsar. Warburton explains it thus: "If I were Brutus, and Brutus were Cassius, he should not cajole me as I do him." Johnson's explanation runs thus: "Cæsar loves Brutus; but if Brutus and I were to change places, his love should not take hold of my affections, so as to make me forget my principles." It is not easy to say which of these is the better; but the latter best agrees with what the Poet read in Plutarch's *Life of Brutus*: "Brutus in many things tasted of the benefite of Cæsar's favour in any thing he requested. For, if he had listed, he might have been one of Cæsars chiefest friends, and of greatest authoritie and credite about him. Howbeit, Cassius friends did dissuade him, and prayed him to beware of Cæsars sweete enticements and to flie his tyrannicall favors; the which they said Cæsar gave

In several hands,³⁹ in at his window throw,
 As if they came from several citizens,
 Writings all tending to the great opinion
 That Rome holds of his name; wherein obscurely
 Cæsar's ambition shall be glanced at:
 And, after this, let Cæsar seat him sure;
 For we will shake him, or worse days endure.⁴⁰

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *The same. A Street.*

Thunder and Lightning. Enter, from opposite sides, CASCA, with his Sword drawn, and CICERO.

Cic. Good even, Casca: brought you Cæsar home?¹
 Why are you breathless? and why stare you so?

Casca. Are not you mov'd, when all the sway of Earth
 Shakes, like a thing unfirm? O Cicero!
 I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds
 Have riv'd the knotty oaks; and I have seen
 Th' ambitious ocean swell and rage and foam,
 To be exalted with the threatening clouds:²
 But never till to-night, never till now,
 Did I go through a tempest dropping fire.
 Either there is a civil strife in Heaven,
 Or else the world, too saucy with the gods,
 Incenses them to send destruction.³

Cic. Why, saw you any thing more wonderful?⁴

Casca. A common slave (you know him well by sight)
 Held up his left hand, which did flame and burn
 Like twenty torches join'd; and yet his hand,
 Not sensible of fire, remain'd unscorch'd.
 Besides, (I have not since put up my sword,)
 Against the Capitol I met a lion,

him, not to honour his virtue, but to weaken his constant mind, framing it to the bent of his bow."

³⁹ In several *hand-writings*.

⁴⁰ We will either shake him, or endure worse days in suffering the consequences of our attempt.—The Poet makes Cassius overflow with intense personal spite against Cæsar. This is in accordance with what he read in *Plutarch*: "Cassius, being a choleric man, and hating Cæsar privately more than he did the tyranny openly, incensed Brutus against him. It is also reported that Brutus could evil away with the tyranny, and that Cassius hated the tyrant." Of course *tyranny* as here used means *royalty*.

¹ Did you *attend* or *escort* him home? This use of *bring* was common.

² *So as*, or *inasmuch as* to be exalted with the threatening clouds. The Poet often uses the infinitive mood thus.

³ Either the gods are fighting among themselves, or else they are making war on the world for being too saucy with them.

⁴ *More* is here equivalent to *else*: saw you any thing more *that was* wonderful?

Who glar'd upon me, and went surly by,
 Without annoying me. And there were drawn
 Upon a heap a hundred ghastly women,⁵
 Transformed with their fear; who swore they saw
 Men, all in fire, walk up and down the streets.
 And yesterday the bird of night did sit
 Even at noon-day upon the market-place,
 Hooting and shrieking.⁶ When these prodigies
 Do so conjointly meet, let not men say,
*These are their reasons, — they are natural;*⁷
 For I believe they are portentous things
 Unto the climate that they point upon.

Cic. Indeed, it is a strange-disposed time :
 But men may construe things after their fashion,
 Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.
 Comes Cæsar to the Capitol to-morrow ?

Casca. He doth; for he did bid Antonius
 Send word to you he would be there to-morrow.

Cic. Good night then, Casca : this disturbed sky
 Is not to walk in.

Casca. Farewell, Cicero. [Exit CICERO.]

Enter CASSIUS.

Cass. Who's there ?

Casca. A Roman.

Cass. Casca, by your voice.

Casca. Your ear is good. Cassius, what night is this !

Cass. A very pleasing night to honest men.

Casca. Who ever knew the Heavens menace so ?

Cass. Those that have known the Earth so full of faults.

For my part, I have walk'd about the streets,
 Submitting me unto the perilous night;
 And, thus unbraced, Casca, as you see,
 Have bar'd my bosom to the thunder-stone :⁸

⁵ Drawn upon a heap is drawn together in a crowd.

⁶ Plutarch, in the *Life of Julius Cæsar*, gives the following account of these wonders: "Touching the fires in the element, and spirits running up and downe in the night, and also the solitary birds to be seene at noon daies sitting in the great market place, are not all these signes perhaps worth the noting in such a wonderfull chance as happened? But Strabo the Philosopher writeth, that divers men were seene going up and downe in fire; and furthermore, that there was a slave of the soldiers, that did cast a marvellous burning flame out of his hand; insomuch as they that saw it thought he had bene burnt, but when the fire was out it was found he had no hurt."

⁷ Casca refers to the doctrine of the Epicureans, who were slow to believe that such elemental pranks had any moral significance in them, or that moral causes had any thing to do with them; and held that the reasons of them were to be sought for in the simple working of natural laws and forces. The mild recepticism of Cicero's reply is exceedingly graceful and apt.

⁸ Thunder-stone is the old word for *thunder-bolt*. — Unbraced answers to our *unbuttoned*.

And when the cross blue lightning seem'd to open
The breast of Heaven, I did present myself
Even in the aim and very flash of it.

Casca. But wherefore did you so much tempt the Heavens?
It is the part of men to fear and tremble,
When the most mighty gods by tokens send
Such dreadful heralds to astonish us.

Cass. You are dull, Casca; and those sparks of life
That should be in a Roman you do want,
Or else you use not. You look pale, and gaze,
And put on fear, and case yourself in wonder,⁹
To see the strange impatience of the Heavens:
But if you would consider the true cause
Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts,
Why birds and beasts, from quality and kind;¹⁰
Why old men fool, and children calculate;
Why all these things change from their ordinance,
Their natures, and preformed faculties,
To monstrous quality; — why, you shall find
That Heaven hath infus'd them with these spirits,
To make them instruments of fear and warning
Unto some monstrous State.¹¹ Now could I, Casca,
Name to thee a man most like this dreadful night;
That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars,
As doth the lion, in the Capitol;¹²
A man no mightier than thyself or me
In personal action; yet prodigious grown,
And fearful, as these strange eruptions are.

⁹ *Attire* yourself in wonder, or put on an expression of wonder. The original has *cast* instead of *case*, — the reading adopted by White and Dyce. I am not quite clear as to the propriety of the change, apt and expressive as it is; though the use of *put on*, just before, favours it.

¹⁰ The sense of *change*, two lines below, appears to be anticipated here. The grammar of the passage is rather badly confused, yet the meaning is clear enough; the general idea being that of elements and animals, and even of old men and children, acting in a manner out of or against their nature and kind; or changing their natures and original faculties from the course, in which they were ordained to move, to monstrous or unnatural modes of action. The original reads, "old men, *fools*, and children." This makes the sense incoherent, and is clearly wrong. The reading of the text gives the coherent and right sense, that old men in being foolish, and children in being considerate, are acting just as much out of character, as the fires and ghosts, the birds and beasts are in what has already been related of them.

¹¹ Some State or Commonwealth that has grown all out of natural propriety. — As Cassius is an avowed Epicurean, it may seem out of character to make him speak thus. But he is here talking for effect, his aim being to kindle and instigate Casca into the conspiracy; and to this end he does not stick to say what he does not himself believe; all which is rightly characteristic of him.

¹² This reads as if a lion were kept in the Capitol to roar for them. But the meaning is that Cæsar roars in the Capitol, like a lion. Perhaps Cassius has the idea of Cæsar's claiming or aspiring to be among men what the lion is among beasts.

Casca. 'Tis Cæsar that you mean; is it not, Cassius?

Cass. Let it be who it is for Romans now
Have thews and limbs like to their ancestors;¹³
But, woe the while! our fathers' minds are dead,
And we are govern'd with our mothers' spirits;
Our yoke and sufferance show us womanish.

Casca. Indeed, they say the Senators to-morrow
Mean to establish Cæsar as a king;
And he shall wear his crown by sea and land,
In every place, save here in Italy.

Cass. I know where I will wear this dagger, then;
Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius:
Therein, ye gods, you make the weak most strong;
Therein, ye gods, you tyrants do defeat:
Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass,
Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron,
Can be retentive to the strength of spirit;
But life, being weary of these worldly bars,
Never lacks power to dismiss itself.
If I know this, know all the world besides,
That part of tyranny that I do bear
I can shake off at pleasure.

[*Thunder still*

Casca. So can I:
So every bondman in his own hand bears
The power to cancel his captivity.

Cass. And why should Cæsar be a tyrant, then?
Poor man! I know he would not be a wolf,
But that he sees the Romans are but sheep:
He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
Those that with haste will make a mighty fire
Begin it with weak straws: What trash is Rome,
What rubbish, and what offal, when it serves
For the base matter to illuminate
So vile a thing as Cæsar!¹⁴ But, O grief,
Where hast thou led me? I perhaps speak this
Before a willing bondman: then I know
My answer must be made; but I am arm'd,
And dangers are to me indifferent.

Casca. You speak to Casca; and to such a man
That is no fleering tell-tale.¹⁵ Hold, my hand:

¹³ *Thews* is an old word, and a right good one too, for *sineus* or *muscles*.

¹⁴ To shed splendour upon him, or to make light for him to shine by.

¹⁵ *Fleering* unites the two senses of *flattering* and *mocking*, and so is just the right epithet for a tell-tale, who flatters you into saying that of another which you ought not to say, and then mocks you by going to that other and telling what you have said.

Be factious for redress of all these griefs;¹⁶
 And I will set this foot of mine as far
 As who goes farthest.

Cass. There's a bargain made.
 Now know you, Casca, I have mov'd already
 Some certain of the noblest-minded Romans
 To undergo with me an enterprise
 Of honourable-dangerous consequence;
 And I do know, by this, they stay for me
 In Pompey's porch: for now, this fearful night,
 There is no stir or walking in the streets;
 And the complexion of the element
 In favour's like the work we have in hand,¹⁷
 Most bloody-flery and most terrible.

Casca. Stand close awhile, for here comes one in haste.

Cass. 'Tis Cinna; I do know him by his gait;
 He is a friend. —

Enter CINNA.

Cinna, where haste you so?

Cin. To find out you. Who's that? Metellus Cimber?

Cass. No, it is Casca; one incorporate
 To our attempt. Am I not stay'd for, Cinna?

Cin. I'm glad on't. What a fearful night is this!
 There's two or three of us have seen strange sights.

Cass. Am I not stay'd for? tell me.

Cin. Yes,
 You are. O, Cassius, if you could but win
 The noble Brutus to our party, —

Cass. Be you content. Good Cinna, take this paper,
 And look you lay it in the prætor's chair,
 Where Brutus may but find it; and throw this
 In at his window; set this up with wax
 Upon old Brutus' statue: all this done,
 Repair to Pompey's Porch,¹⁸ where you shall find us.
 Is Decius Brutus and Trebonius there?

Cin. All but Metellus Cimber; and he's gone
 To seek you at your house. Well, I will hie,
 And so bestow these papers as you bade me.

Cass. That done, repair to Pompey's theatre. —

[*Exit CINNA.*]

Come, Casca, you and I will yet, ere day,

¹⁶ *Factious* seems to be here used in its original sense of *doing or active*.

¹⁷ *Favour* here is put for *appearance, look, countenance*.

¹⁸ Pompey's Porch was a spacious adjunct to the great theatre which Pompey had built a few years before.

See Brutus at his house : three parts of him
Is ours already ;¹⁹ and the man entire,
Upon the next encounter, yields him ours.

Casca. O, he sits high in all the people's hearts !
And that which would appear offence in us,
His countenance, like richest alchymy,
Will change to virtue and to worthiness.

Cass. Him, and his worth, and our great need of him,
You have right well conceited.²⁰ Let us go,
For it is after midnight ; and, ere day,
We wil. awake him, and be sure of him. [*Recount.*]

ACT II. SCENE I. *Rome.* BRUTUS's Orchard.¹

Enter BRUTUS.

Bru. What, Lucius, ho ! —
I cannot, by the progress of the stars,
Give guess how near to day. — Lucius, I say ! —
I would it were my fault to sleep so soundly. —
When, Lucius, when !² Awake, I say ! what, Lucius !

Enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Call'd you, my lord ?
Bru. Get me a taper in my study, Lucius :
When it is lighted, come and call me here.
Luc. I will, my lord. [*Exit.*]

Bru. It must be by his death :³ and, for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general.⁴ He would be crown'd :
How that might change his nature, there's the question :
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder ;⁵
And that craves wary walking. Crown him ; — that ; —

¹⁹ The discord of *parts* and *is* was not ungrammatical in the Poet's time

²⁰ *Conceit* is always used by Shakespeare in a good sense. Here it means *conceived*.

¹ *Orchard* and *garden* were synonymous. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Capulet's garden is twice called *orchard*. The word was anciently written *hort-yard*.

² *When !* was sometimes used as an exclamation of impatience.

³ Brutus has been casting about on all sides to find some other means to prevent Cæsar's being king, and here gives it up that this can be done only by killing him. Thus the speech opens in just the right way to throw us back upon his antecedent meditations.

⁴ The *public cause*. The use of *general* in the sense of *public* is common.

⁵ The Poet is apt to be right in his observation of Nature. In a bright warm day the snakes come out to bask in the sun. And the idea is, that the sunshine of roya ty will kindle the serpent in Cæsar.

And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,
 That at his will he may do danger with.
 Th' abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
 Remorse from power ;⁶ and, to speak truth of Cæsar,
 I have not known when his affections sway'd
 More than his reason.⁷ But 'tis a common proof,
 That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
 Whereto the climber-upward turns his face ;
 But, when he once attains the upmost round,
 He then unto the ladder turns his back,
 Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
 By which he did ascend :⁸ so Cæsar may ;
 Then, lest he may, prevent. And, since the quarrel
 Will bear no colour for the thing he is,⁹
 Fashion it thus ; that what he is, augmented,
 Would run to these and these extremities :
 And therefore think him as a serpent's egg,
 Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous ;
 And kill him in the shell.

Re-enter LUCIUS.

Luc. The taper burneth in your closet, sir.
 Searching the window for a flint, I found
 This paper thus seal'd up ; and I am sure
 It did not lie there when I went to bed.

Bru. Get you to bed again ; it is not day.
 Is not to-morrow, boy, the ides of March ?

Luc. I know not, sir.

Bru. Look in the calendar, and bring me word.

Luc. I will, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Bru. The exhalations, whizzing in the air,
 Give so much light that I may read by them. —

[*Opens the Paper, and reads.*]

⁶ Remorse in *Shakespeare* commonly means *pity* or *compassion*. Power is apt to harden the heart, and make men cruel ; and the logic of the passage is, that it has had no such effect on Cæsar ; that in all his greatness he has still kept his tenderness of heart.

⁷ By *affection* the Poet sometimes means susceptibility of being *affected* by external things, as distinguished from firmness of reason. Here the sense is, that Cæsar has not been corrupted by power, or drawn from the course of reason into any "abuse of greatness."

⁸ *Degrees* is here used in its primitive sense of *steps*, meaning the rounds of the ladder.

⁹ This is rather oddly expressed. The meaning is, Since we have no colour of a pretext, in what Cæsar now is, or in any thing he has yet done, for driving this quarrel against him, let us assume that the further addition of a crown will quite upset his nature. — The strain of subtle casuistry used in this speech is very remarkable, and may well provoke a question as to what sort of a character the Poet meant his Brutus to be. Coleridge found it very perplexing. Certainly it is such a style of reasoning as no clear-headed honest man would use.

Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake and see thyself.

Shall Rome, &c. Speak, strike, redress! —

Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake! —

Such instigations have been often dropp'd
Where I have took them up.

Shall Rome, &c. Thus must I piece it out:

Shall Rome stand under one man's awe? What, Rome?

My ancestor did from the streets of Rome

The Tarquin drive, when he was call'd a king. —

Speak, strike, redress! — Am I entreated

To speak and strike? O Rome, I make thee promise,

If the redress will follow, thou receivest

Thy full petition at the hand of Brutus!

Re-enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Sir, March is wasted fourteen days.¹⁰

[*Knocking within.*

Bru. 'Tis good. Go to the gate; somebody knocks. —

[*Exit LUCIUS.*

Since Cassius first did whet me against Cæsar,
I have not slept.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing

And the first motion,¹¹ all the interim is

Like a phantasma or a hideous dream:

The Genius and the mortal instruments

Are then in council;¹² and the state of man,

Like to a little kingdom, suffers then

The nature of an insurrection.

Re-enter LUCIUS.

Luc. Sir, 'tis your brother Cassius at the door,
Who doth desire to see you.

Bru.

Is he alone?

¹⁰ The original has *fifteen* instead of *fourteen*. As this is on the morning of the fifteenth, our mode of reckoning would count only fourteen days as wasted.

¹¹ "The first motion" is the first *thought*, or the first *budding* of the thought into *purpose*. The state of mind here *spoken of* is wonderfully represented in the case of Macbeth, in the uncontrollable nervousness which the purpose generates in him.

¹² *Mortal* is here used in the sense of *deadly*; for that which *kills*, not that which *dies*. The Poet often uses it so; as in Lady Macbeth's fearful invocation, "Come, you spirits that tend on *mortal* thoughts." The passage is meant to suggest the intense struggle of conflicting motions that goes on in a man between the first conception and the final execution of "a dreadful thing." The Genius, or the governing part, holds a council with the subordinate faculties, its ministers, which shrink from executing its will; and are in revolt against the Genius until it schools or forces them into executive obedience. These ministers are the deadly instruments which, by standing out from the ministry of death, fill the mind with insurrectionary disorder.

Luc. No, sir; there are more with him.

Bru. Do you know them?

Luc. No, sir: their hats are pluck'd about their ears,
And half their faces buried in their cloaks,
That by no means I may discover them
By any mark of favour.

Bru. Let 'em enter. — [*Exit LUCIUS.*]
They are the faction. — O Conspiracy,
Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
When evils are most free?¹³ O, then, by day
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none, Conspiracy
Hide it in smiles and affability:
For if thou put thy native semblance on,¹⁴
Not Erebus itself were dim enough
To hide thee from prevention.¹⁵

*Enter CASSIUS, CASCA, DECIUS, CINNA, METELLUS CIMBER,
and TREBONIUS.*

Cass. I think we are too bold upon your rest:
Good morrow, Brutus; do we trouble you?

Bru. I have been up this hour, awake all night.
Know I these men that come along with you?

Cass. Yes, every man of them; and no man here,
But honours you; and every one doth wish
You had but that opinion of yourself
Which every noble Roman bears of you.
This is Trebonius.

Bru. He is welcome hither.

Cass. This Decius Brutus.¹⁶

Bru. He is welcome too.

Cass. This, Casca; this, Cinna; and this Metellus Cimbet.

Bru. They are all welcome. —

¹³ When *crimes*, or perhaps evil *men*, are most free from the restraints of law, or of shame.

¹⁴ The original has *path* instead of *put*. *Path* is retained by some editors, setting a (,) after it, and taking it in the sense of *pass*. Mr. Dyce reads *put*. I cannot say that I am fully satisfied with either reading. *Pass* and *have* have also been proposed.

¹⁵ To hide thee from *discovery*, which would lead to prevention.

¹⁶ Shakespeare found the name thus in *Plutarch*. In fact, however, it was *Decianus*, not *Decius*. The man is not known to have been any kin to the other Brutus of the play. He had been one of Cæsar's ablest, most favoured, and most trusted lieutenants, and had particularly distinguished himself in his naval service at Venetia and Massilia. After the murder of Cæsar, he was found to be written down in his will as one of his heirs; also to be prospectively designated by him for certain offices, which he was so patriotic as to accept. And he was the second of the conspirators to be slain, while Trebonius was the first; who had also served with ability and honour in Cæsar's campaigns.

What watchful cares do interpose themselves
Betwixt your eyes and night?

Cass. Shall I entreat a word? [*They whisper.*]

Dec. Here lies the East: doth not the day break here?

Casca. No.

Cin. O, pardon, sir, it doth; and yon gray lines
That fret the clouds are messengers of day.

Casca. You shall confess that you are both deceiv'd.
Here, as I point my sword, the Sun arises;
Which is a great way growing on the South,
Weighing the youthful season of the year.¹⁷
Scme two months hence, up higher toward the North
He first presents his fire; and the high East
Stands, as the Capitol, directly here.

Bru. Give me your hands all over, one by one.

Cass. And let us swear our resolution.

Bru. No, not an oath: if not the face of men,¹⁸
The sufferance of our souls, the time's abuse, —
If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
And every man hence to his idle bed;
So let high-sighted tyranny range on,
Till each man drop by lottery.¹⁹ But if these,
As I am sure they do, bear fire enough
To kindle cowards, and to steel with valour
The melting spirits of women; then, countrymen,
What need we any spur but our own cause
To prick us to redress? what other bond
Than secret Romans, that have spoke the word,
And will not palter? ²⁰ and what other oath
Than honesty to honesty engag'd,
That this shall be, or we will fall for it?
Swear priests, and cowards, and men cautelous,²¹

¹⁷ *Verging towards* the South, considering, or in accordance with, the early time of the year. — "The high East" is the perfect East. So the Poet has "high morning" for morning full-blown. — This little side-talk on an indifferent theme is very finely conceived, and aptly marks the men as seeking to divert off the anxious thoughts of the moment by any casual chat. It also serves the double purpose of showing that they are not listening, and of preventing suspicion, if any were listening to them.

¹⁸ "The face of men" seems to mean nothing more nor less than the aspect of men, or their anxiety as depicted in their looks. Some think the reading corrupt, but I can see no difficulty in it. — The change of construction in the sentence gives it a more colloquial taste, without causing any obscurity or confusion of thought.

¹⁹ Till each man drop as his allotted time provides.

²⁰ To palter is to shuffle or equivocate. — Engag'd is pledged. See page 103, note 23.

²¹ *Cautelous* is here used in the sense of deceit or fraud; though its original meaning is wary, circumspect, the same as cautious. The word is said to have caught a bad sense in passing through French hands.

Old feeble carrions, and such suffering souls
 That welcome wrongs; unto bad causes swear
 Such creatures as men doubt: but do not stain
 The even virtue of our enterprise,
 Nor th' insuppressive mettle of our spirits;²³
 To think that or our cause or our performance
 Did need an oath; when every drop of blood
 That every Roman bears, and nobly bears,
 Is guilty of a several bastardy,
 If he do break the smallest particle
 Of any promise that hath pass'd from him.

Cass. But what of Cicero? Shall we sound him?
 I think he will stand very strong with us.

Casca. Let us not leave him out.

On.

No, by no means.

Met. O, let us have him! for his silver hairs
 Will purchase us a good opinion,
 And buy men's voices to commend our deeds:
 It shall be said, his judgment rul'd our hands;
 Our youths and wildness shall no whit appear,
 But all be buried in his gravity.

Bru. O, name him not! let us not break with him;²⁴
 For he will never follow any thing
 That other men begin.

Cass. Then leave him out,

Casca. Indeed, he is not fit.

Dec. Shall no man else be touch'd but only Cæsar?

Cass. Decius, well urg'd. — I thing it is not meet,
 Mark Antony, so well belov'd of Cæsar,
 Should outlive Cæsar: we shall find of him
 A shrewd contriver; and you know, his means,
 If he improve them, may well stretch so far
 As to annoy us all: which to prevent,
 Let Antony and Cæsar fall together.

Bru. Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
 To cut the head off, and then hack the limbs,
 Like wrath in death, and envy afterwards;²⁴
 For Antony is but a limb of Cæsar.

²³ *Insuppressible* mettle; the active form with the passive sense. See page 66, note 4.

²⁴ Old language for "let us not break *the matter* to him." — This bit of dialogue is very charming. Brutus knows full well that Cicero is not the man to play second fiddle to any of *them*; that if he have any thing to do with the enterprise it must be as the leader of it, and the biggest man in it, and that is just what Brutus wants to be himself. Merivale thinks it a great honour to Cicero, that the conspirators did not venture to propose the matter to him.

²⁴ *Envy* here, as almost always by Shakespeare, is used for *malice*. See page 151, note 1.

Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.
 We all stand up against the spirit of Cæsar;
 And in the spirit of men there is no blood:
 O, that we then could come by Cæsar's spirit,
 And not dismember Cæsar! But, alas,
 Cæsar must bleed for it! And, gentle friends,
 Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;
 Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
 Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds:
 And let our hearts, as subtle masters do,
 Stir up their servants to an act of rage,
 And after seem to chide 'em. This shall make
 Our purpose necessary, and not envious;²⁵
 Which so appearing to the common eyes,
 We shall be call'd purgers, not murderers.
 And for Mark Antony, think not of him;
 For he can do no more than Cæsar's arm
 When Cæsar's head is off.²⁶

Cass. Yet I fear him;

For in th' ingrafted love he bears to Cæsar —

Bru. Alas, good Cassius, do not think of him.

If he love Cæsar, all that he can do

Is to himself, — take thought, and die for Cæsar:²⁷

And that were much he should; for he is given

To sports, to wildness, and much company.

Treb. There is no fear in him;²⁸ let him not die;

For he will live, and laugh at this hereafter. [*Clock strikes.*]

Bru. Peace! count the clock.

Cass.

The clock hath stricken three.

Treb. 'Tis time to part.

Cass.

But it is doubtful yet

Whether Cæsar will come forth to-day or no;

For he is superstitious grown of late,

Quite from the main opinion he held once

Of fantasy, of dreams, and ceremonies.²⁹

²⁵ Shall make our purpose *seem the offspring of necessity*, not of malice. Perhaps it should be *mark* instead of *make*. — *Shall* is here an instance of the undifferentiated use of *shall* and *will*. The same thing occurs in our English Bible.

²⁶ Here we have, I think, an apt specimen of the subtle historic irony that pervades this play. There are many other outcroppings of like sort.

²⁷ To *take thought and die*, is, in old language, to *grieve himself to death*; and it would be very strange if Antony should do this, such a light-hearted, jolly companion as he is. See page 203, note 10.

²⁸ Nothing in him to be feared, or no fear on account of him. The same historic irony again.

²⁹ Cæsar held the Epicurean doctrine, as most of the educated Romans of his time also did; and the scepticism which that doctrine taught as to dreams and ceremonial auguries, was his "main opinion," or the corner-

It may be, these apparent prodigies,
The unaccustom'd terror of this night,
And the persuasion of his augurers,
May hold him from the Capitol to-day.

Dec. Never fear that: if he be so resolv'd,
I can o'ersway him; for he loves to hear
That unicorns may be betray'd with trees,
And bears with glasses, elephants with holes,³⁰
Lions with toils, and men with flatterers:
But when I tell him he hates flatterers,
He says he does, being then most flattered.
Let me work;

For I can give his humour the true bent,
And I will bring him to the Capitol.

Cass. Nay, we will all of us be there to fetch him.

Bru. By the eighth hour: is that the uttermost?

Cin. Be that the uttermost; and fail not then.

Met. Caius Ligarius doth bear Cæsar hard,
Who rated him for speaking well of Pompey:
I wonder none of you have thought of him.

Bru. Now, good Metellus, go along by him:³¹
He loves me well, and I have given him reasons;
Send him but hither, and I'll fashion him.

Cass. The morning comes upon 's: we'll leave you, Brutus:—
And, friends, disperse yourselves; but all remember
What you have said, and show yourselves true Romans.

Bru. Good gentlemen, look fresh and merrily;
Let not our looks put on our purposes;³²
But bear it as our Roman actors do,
With untir'd spirits and formal constancy:
And so, good-morrow to you every one. —

[*Exeunt all but BRUTUS.*]

Boy! Lucius! — Fast asleep? It is no matter;
Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber:³³

stone of his philosophy. His later years, however, are said to have been marked with some rather gross instances of superstitious practice.

³⁰ *Unicorns* are said to have been taken by one who, running behind a tree, eluded the violent push the animal was making at him, so that his horn spent its force on the trunk, and stuck fast, detaining the animal till he was despatched by the hunter. *Bears* are reported to have been surprised by means of a *mirror*, which they would gaze on, affording their pursuers an opportunity of taking the surer aim. *Elephants* were seduced into pitfalls, lightly covered with hurdles and turf, on which a proper bait to tempt them was placed.

³¹ That is, by his house; make that your way home.

³² Let not our looks betray our purposes by wearing or being attired with any indications of them.

³³ The compound epithet *honey-heavy* is very expressive and apt. The "dew of slumber" is called *heavy* because it makes the subject feel heavy, and *honey-heavy* because the heaviness it induces is sweet. — Brutus is nat-

Thou hast no figures nor no fantasies,
Which busy care draws in the brains of men;
Therefore thou sleepest so sound.

Enter PORTIA.

Por. Brutus, my lord!

Bru. Portia, what mean you? wherefore rise you now?
It is not for your health, thus to commit
Your weak condition to the raw-cold morning.

Por. Nor for yours neither. You've ungently, Brutus,
Stole from my bed: and yesternight, at supper,
You suddenly arose, and walk'd about,
Musing and sighing, with your arms across;
And when I ask'd you what the matter was,
You star'd upon me with ungentle looks:
I urg'd you further; then you scratch'd your head,
And too impatiently stamp'd with your foot:
Yet I insisted, yet you answer'd not;
But, with an angry wafture of your hand,
Gave sign for me to leave you. So I did;
Fearing to strengthen that impatience
Which seem'd too much enkindled; and withal
Hoping it was but an effect of humour,
Which sometime hath his hour with every man.
It will not let you eat, nor talk, nor sleep;
And, could it work so much upon your shape,
As it hath much prevail'd on your condition,⁸⁴
I should not know you, Brutus. Dear my lord,
Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.

Bru. I am not well in health, and that is all.

Por. Brutus is wise, and, were he not in health,
He would embrace the means to come by it.

Bru. Why, so I do. — Good Portia, go to bed.

Por. Is Brutus sick? and is it physical⁸⁵
To walk unbraced, and suck up the humours
Of the dank morning? What, is Brutus sick,
And will he steal out of his wholesome bed,
To dare the vile contagion of the night,

usually led to contrast the free and easy state of the boy's mind with that of his own, which the excitement of his present undertaking is drawing full of visions and images of trouble.

⁸⁴ *Condition* was much used for *temper* or *disposition*. See page 84, note 22.

⁸⁵ The Poet has *physical* again in the sense of *wholesome* or *medicinal*, in *Coriolanus*, i. 5: "The blood I drop is rather *physical* than dangerous to me." *Unbraced* has occurred before for *unbuttoned*.

And tempt the rheumy and unpurged air³⁶
 To add unto his sickness? No, my Brutus;
 You have some sick offence within your mind,
 Which, by the right and virtue of my place,
 I ought to know of: and, upon my knees,
 I charm you,³⁷ by my once-commended beauty,
 By all your vows of love, and that great vow
 Which did incorporate and make us one,
 That you unfold to me, yourself, your half,
 Why you are heavy, and what men to-night
 Have had resort to you; for here have been
 Some six or seven, who did hide their faces
 Even from darkness.

Bru. Kneel not, gentle Portia.

Por. I should not need, if you were gentle Brutus.
 Within the bond of marriage, tell me, Brutus,
 Is it excepted I should know no secrets
 That appertain to you? Am I yourself
 But, as it were, in sort or limitation,—
 To keep with you at meals, comfort your bed,
 And talk to you sometimes? Dwell I but in the suburbs
 Of your good pleasure?³⁸ If it be no more,
 Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife.

Bru. You are my true and honourable wife;
 As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
 That visit my sad heart.³⁹

Por. If this were true, then should I know this secret.
 I grant I am a woman; but withal
 A woman that Lord Brutus took to wife:
 I grant I am a woman; but withal
 A woman well reputed, Cato's daughter.
 Think you I am no stronger than my sex,
 Being so father'd and so husbanded?
 Tell me your counsels, I will not disclose 'em.

³⁶ *Rheum* is specially used of the fluids that issue from the eyes or mouth. So in *Hamlet* we have "bisson rheum" for blinding tears. *Rheumy* here means that state of the air which causes the unhealthy issue of such fluids; or perhaps which makes people *rheumatic*. So, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, ii. 1, Titania speaks of the Moon as "washing all the air, that rheumatic diseases do abound."

³⁷ *Charm* is here used nearly, if not exactly, in the sense of *conjure*. Perhaps it should be *charge*, as Pope read.

³⁸ In the outskirts or borders, and not at the centre or near the heart, of your good pleasure. A charming image.

³⁹ This embodies what was then known touching the circulation of the blood. William Harvey was born in 1578, fourteen years after Shakespeare, and his discovery was not published till 1628, twelve years after the Poet's death. The general fact of the circulation of the blood was known in ancient times; and Harvey's discovery lay in ascertaining the *modus operandi* of it, and in reducing it to matter of strict science.

I have made strong proof of my constancy,
 Giving myself a voluntary wound
 Here, in the thigh: can I bear that with patience,
 And not my husband's secrets?

Bru. O, ye gods,
 Render me worthy of this noble wife! — [*Knocking within.*
 Hark, hark! one knocks: Portia, go in awhile;
 And by-and-by thy bosom shall partake
 The secrets of my heart:
 All my engagements I will construe to thee,
 All the charactery of my sad brows:⁴⁰
 Leave me with haste. [*Exit PORTIA.*] — Lucius, who's that
 knocks?

Re-enter LUCIUS with LIGARIUS.

Luc. Here is a sick man that would speak with you.

Bru. Caius Ligarius, that Metellus spake of. —
 Boy, stand aside. — Caius Ligarius, — how!

Lig. Vouchsafe good-morrow from a feeble tongue.

Bru. O, what a time have you chose out, brave Caius,
 To wear a kerchief!⁴¹ Would you were not sick!

Lig. I am not sick, if Brutus have in hand
 Any exploit worthy the name of honour.

Bru. Such an exploit have I in hand, Ligarius,
 Had you a healthful ear to hear of it.

Lig. By all the gods that Romans bow before,
 I here discard my sickness. Soul of Rome!
 Brave son, deriv'd from honourable loins!
 Thou, like an exorcist,⁴² hast conjur'd up
 My mortified spirit. Now bid me run,
 And I will strive with things impossible;
 Yea, get the better of them. What's to do?

Bru. A piece of work that will make sick men whole.

Lig. But are not some whole that we must make sick?

Bru. That must we also. What it is, my Caius,
 I shall unfold to thee, as we are going,
 To whom it must be done.

Lig. Set on your foot,

⁴⁰ *Charactery* is defined "writing by characters or strange marks." Brutus therefore means that he will divulge to her the secret cause of the sadness marked on his countenance.

⁴¹ It was a common practice in England for those who were sick to wear a kerchief on their heads. Thus, in Fuller's *Worthies of Cheshire*: "If any there be sick, they make him a posset and tie a kerchief on his head; and if that will not mend him, then God be merciful to him."

⁴² In Shakespeare's time, *exorcist* and *conjuror* were used indifferently. The former has since come to mean only one who drives away spirits; the latter, one who calls them up.

And with a heart new-fir'd I follow you,
To do I know not what; but it sufficeth
That Brutus leads me on.

Bru.

Follow me, then.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Same. A Room in CÆSAR'S Palace.*

Thunder and Lightning. Enter CÆSAR, in his Night-gown.

Cæs. Nor Heaven nor Earth have been at peace to-night:
Thrice hath Calpurnia in her sleep cried out,
Help, ho! they murder Cæsar! — Who's within?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord?

Cæs. Go bid the priests do present sacrifice,
And bring me their opinions of success.¹

Serv. I will, my lord.

[*Exit.*]

Enter CALPURNIA.

Cal. What mean you, Cæsar? think you to walk forth?
You shall not stir out of your house to-day.

Cæs. Cæsar shall forth: the things that threaten'd me
Ne'er look'd but on my back; when they shall see
The face of Cæsar, they are vanished.

Cal. Cæsar, I never stood on ceremonies,²
Yet now they fright me. There is one within,
Besides the things that we have heard and seen,
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;
Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;
The noise of battle hurtled in the air;³
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan;
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.
O Cæsar, these things are beyond all use,
And I do fear them!

Cæs. What can be avoided
Whose end is purpos'd by the mighty gods?

¹ Their opinions of what is to follow. The Poet often uses *success* in this its Latin sense: so that we have the phrases "good success" and "ill success."

² *Ceremonies* is here put for the ceremonial or sacerdotal interpretation of prodigies and omens. See, also, page 455, note 29.

³ To *hurtle* is to clash, or move with violence and noise.

Yet Cæsar shall go forth ; for these predictions
Are to the world in general as to Cæsar.*

Cal. When beggars die, there are no comets seen ;
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

Cæs. Cowards die many times before their deaths ;
The valiant never taste of death but once.⁵
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear ;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come. —

Re-enter the Servant.

What say the augurers ?

Serv. They would not have you to stir forth to-day.
Plucking the entrails of an offering forth,
They could not find a heart within the beast.

Cæs. The gods do this in shame of cowardice :
Cæsar should be a beast without a heart,
If he should stay at home to-day for fear.
No, Cæsar shall not : Danger knows full well
That Cæsar is more dangerous than he :
We are two lions litter'd in one day,
And I the elder and more terrible ; —
And Cæsar shall go forth.

Cal. Alas, my lord,
Your wisdom is consum'd in confidence !
Do not go forth to-day : call it my fear
That keeps you in the house, and not your own.
We'll send Mark Antony to the Senate-House ;
And he shall say you are not well to-day :
Let me, upon my knee, prevail in this.

Cæs. Mark Antony shall say I am not well ;
And, for thy humour, I will stay at home.

Enter DECIVS.

Here's Decius Brutus, he shall tell them so.

Dec. Cæsar, all hail ! Good morrow, worthy Cæsar :

* These prodigies have no special reference to me ; they point just as much to others.

⁵ This is historical. Plutarch relates that, a short time before Cæsar fell, some of his friends urged him to have a guard about him, and he replied that it was better to die at once, than live in the continual fear of death. A like saying is reported as having come from our President Lincoln, a short time before he was murdered. Cæsar is also said to have given as his reason for refusing a guard, that he thought Rome had more need of him, than he had of Rome : which was indeed true. And it is further stated that, on the eve of the fatal day, Cæsar being at the house of Lepidus with some friends, and the question being raised, "What kind of death is best ?" he cut short the discussion by saying, "That which is least expected."

I come to fetch you to the Senate-House.

Cæs. And you are come in very happy time
To bear my greeting to the Senators,
And tell them that I will not come to-day.
Cannot, is false; and that I dare not, falser:
I will not come to-day. Tell them so, Decius.

Cal. Say he is sick.

Cæs. Shall Cæsar send a lie?
Have I in conquest stretch'd mine arm so far,
To be afraid to tell gray-beards the truth?—
Decius, go tell them Cæsar will not come.

Dec. Most mighty Cæsar, let me know some cause,
Lest I be laugh'd at when I tell them so.

Cæs. The cause is in my will; I will not come:
That is enough to satisfy the Senate.
But, for your private satisfaction,
Because I love you, I will let you know:
Calpurnia here, my wife, stays me at home:
She dream'd to-night she saw my statua,⁶
Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,
Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it:
And these doth she apply for warnings and portents
Of evils imminent; and on her knee
Hath begg'd that I will stay at home to-day.

Dec. This dream is all amiss interpreted:
It was a vision fair and fortunate.
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,
In which so many smiling Romans bath'd,
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck
Reviving blood; and that great men shall press
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.⁷
This by Calpurnia's dream is signified.

Cæs. And this way have you well expounded it.

Dec. I have, when you have heard what I can say;
And know it now: The Senate have concluded

⁶ In Shakespeare's time *statua* was pronounced indifferently as a word of two syllables or three. Bacon uses it repeatedly as a trisyllable, and spells it *statua*, as in his *Advancement of Learning*: "It is not possible to have the true pictures of *statuaes* of Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar, no, nor of the kings or great personages of much later years." The measure evidently requires that it be a word of three syllables here, as also in Act iii. sc. 2; "And at the base of Pompey's *statua*."

⁷ *Cognizance* is here used in a heraldic sense, as meaning any badge or token to show whose friends or servants the owners or wearers were. In ancient times, when martyrs or other distinguished men were executed, their friends often *pressed* to stain handkerchiefs with their blood, or to get some other relic, which they might keep, either as precious memorials of them, or as having a kind of sacramental virtue.

To give this day a crown to mighty Cæsar.
 If you shall send them word you will not come,
 Their minds may change. Besides, it were a mock
 Apt to be render'd, for some one to say,
Break up the Senate till another time,
When Cæsar's wife shall meet with better dreams.
 If Cæsar hide himself, shall they not whisper,
Lo, Cæsar is afraid?

Pardon me, Cæsar; for my dear dear love
 To your proceeding bids me tell you this;
 And reason to my love is liable.⁸

Cæs. How foolish do your fears seem now, Calpurnia!
 I am ashamed I did yield to them. —
 Give me my robe, for I will go: —

Enter PUBLIUS, BRUTUS, LIGARIUS, METELLUS, CASCA,
 TREBONIUS, and CINNA.

And look where Publius is come to fetch me.⁹

Pub. Good morrow, Cæsar.

Cæs. Welcome, Publius. —
 What, Brutus, are you stirr'd so early too? —
 Good morrow, Casca. — Caius Ligarius,
 Cæsar was ne'er so much your enemy
 As that same ague which hath made you lean.¹⁰ —
 What is't o'clock?

Bru. Cæsar, 'tis stricken eight.

Cæs. I thank you for your pains and courtesy.

Enter ANTONY.

See! Antony, that revels long o' nights,
 Is notwithstanding up. — Good morrow, Antony.

Ant. So to most noble Cæsar.

Cæs. Bid them prepare within: —
 I am to blame to be thus waited for. —
 Now, Cinna: — Now, Metellus: — What, Trebonius!
 I have an hour's talk in store for you.
 Remember that you call on me to-day:
 Be near me, that I may remember you.

Treb. Cæsar, I will: — [*Aside.*] and so near will I be,
 That your best friends shall wish I had been further.

⁸ A singular use of *liable*; but meaning, probably, that the deference, which reason holds as due to the head of the State, yields or stands second to the promptings of personal affection.

⁹ This was Publius Silicius; not one of the conspirators.

¹⁰ Here, for the first time, we have Cæsar speaking fairly in character; for he was probably the most finished gentleman of his time, one of the sweetest of men, and as full of kindness as of wisdom and courage. *Mari-vale* aptly styles him "Cæsar, the politic and the merciful."

Cæs. Good friends, go in, and taste some wine with me;
And we, like friends, will straightway go together.

Brus. [*Aside.*] That every like is not the same, O Cæsar,
The heart of Brutus yearns to think upon! ¹¹ [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The Same. A Street near the Capitol.*

Enter ARTEMIDORUS, reading a Paper.

Artem. Cæsar, beware of Brutus; take heed of Cassius;
come not near Casca; have an eye to Cinna; trust not Tre-
bonius; mark well Metellus Cimber; Decius Brutus loves thee
not; thou hast wrong'd Caius Ligarius. There is but one
mind in all these men, and it is bent against Cæsar. If thou
be'st not immortal, look about you: security gives way to con-
spiracy. The mighty gods defend thee! Thy lover,

ARTEMIDORUS.

Here will I stand till Cæsar pass along,
And as a suitor will I give him this.
My heart laments that virtue cannot live
Out of the teeth of emulation.¹² —
If thou read this, O Cæsar, thou may'st live;
If not, the Fates with traitors do contrive.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV. *The Same. Another Part of the same Street,
before the House of BRUTUS.*

Enter PORTIA and LUCIUS.

Por. I pr'ythee, boy, run to the Senate-House:
Stay not to answer me, but get thee gone.
Why dost thou stay?

Luc. To know my errand, Madam.

Por. I would have had thee there, and here again,
Ere I can tell thee what thou should'st do there. —

[*Aside.*] O constancy, be strong upon my side!
Set a huge mountain 'tween my heart and tongue!

I have a man's mind, but a woman's might.
How hard it is for women to keep counsel! —

Art thou here yet?

Luc. Madam, what should I do?
Run to the Capitol, and nothing else?

¹¹ The winning and honest suavity of Cæsar here starts a pang of remorse in Brutus. Drinking wine together was regarded as a sacred pledge of truth and honour. Brutus knows that Cæsar is doing it in good faith, and it hurts him to think that the others *seem* to be doing the *like*, and yet are doing a very different thing.

¹² *Emulation* is here used in its old sense of *envious* or *factions rivalry*.

And so return to you, and nothing else?

Por. Yes; bring me word, boy, if thy lord look well,
For he went sickly forth: and take good note
What Cæsar doth, what suitors press to him.
Hark, boy! what noise is that?

Luc. I hear none, Madam.

Por. Pr'ythee, listen well:
I heard a bustling rumour, like a fray,
And the wind brings it from the Capitol.

Luc. Sooth, Madam, I hear nothing.

*Enter the Soothsayer.*¹³

Por. Come hither, fellow. Which way hast thou been?

Sooth. At mine own house, good lady.

Por. What is't o'clock?

Sooth. About the ninth hour, lady.

Por. Is Cæsar yet gone to the Capitol?

Sooth. Madam, not yet: I go to take my stand,
To see him pass on to the Capitol.

Por. Thou hast some suit to Cæsar, hast thou not?

Sooth. That I have, lady: if it will please Cæsar
To be so good to Cæsar as to hear me,
I shall beseech him to befriend himself.

Por. Why, know'st thou any harm's intended towards
him?

Sooth. None that I know will be, much that I fear may
chance.

Good morrow to you. — Here the street is narrow:

The throng that follows Cæsar at the heels,

Of Senators, of Prætors, common suitors,

Will crowd a feeble man almost to death:

I'll get me to a place more void, and there

Speak to great Cæsar as he comes along. [*Exit.*]

Por. I must go in. — [*Aside.*] Ah me, how weak a thing

The heart of woman is! — O Brutus,

The Heavens speed thee in thine enterprise! —

Sure, the boy heard me. — Brutus hath a suit

That Cæsar will not grant.¹⁴ — O, I grow faint. —

Run, Lucius, and commend me to my lord;

Say I am merry: come to me again,

And bring me word what he doth say to thee. [*Exeunt.*]

¹³ The name of this augur was Spurinna.

¹⁴ These words Portia addresses to Lucius, to deceive him, by assigning a false cause for her present perturbation.

ACT III. SCENE I. *Rome. Before the Capitol; the Senate sitting.*

A Crowd of People in the Street leading to the Capitol; among them ARTEMIDORUS, and the Soothsayer. Flourish. Enter CÆSAR, BRUTUS, CASSIUS, CASCA, DECIUS, METELLUS, TREBONIUS, CINNA, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, POPILIUS, PUBLIUS, and Others.

Cæs. The ides of March are come.

Sooth. Ay, Cæsar; but not gone.

Art. Hail, Cæsar! Read this schedule.

Dec. Trebonius doth desire you to o'er-read,
At your best leisure, this his humble suit.

Art. O, Cæsar, read mine first; for mine's a suit
That touches Cæsar nearer: read it, great Cæsar.

Cæs. What touches us ourself shall be last serv'd.

Art. Delay not, Cæsar; read it instantly.

Cæs. What, is the fellow mad?

Pub. Sirrah, give place.

Cæs. What, urge you your petitions in the street?
Come to the Capitol.¹

CÆSAR enters the Capitol, the Rest following. All the Senators rise.

Pop. I wish your enterprise to-day may thrive.

Cass. What enterprise, Popilius?

Pop. Fare you well.

Bru. What said Popilius Lena?

Cass. He wish'd to-day our enterprise might thrive.
I fear our purpose is discovered.

Bru. Look, how he makes to Cæsar: mark him.

Cass. Casca, be sudden, for we fear prevention. —
Brutus, what shall be done? If this be known,
Cassius or Cæsar never shall turn back,²
For I will slay myself.

¹ The murder of Cæsar did not, in fact, take place in the Capitol, as is here represented, but in a hall or *Curia* adjoining Pompey's theatre, where a statue of Pompey had been erected. The Senate had various places of meeting; generally in the Capitol, occasionally in some one of the Temples, at other times in one of the *Curie*, of which there were several in and about the city.

² Some editors read "Cassius on Cæsar never shall turn back." The change of *or* into *on* is plausible, as such a misprint was easy; yet I find no sufficient occasion for it. The meaning of Cassius I take to be, that he will *either* kill Cæsar or himself. — Here again we have *shall* where the idiom of our time would use *will*.

Bru. Cassius, be constant:
Popilius Lena speaks not of our purpose;
For, look, he smiles, and Cæsar doth not change.

Cass. Trebonius knows his time; for, look you, Brutus,
He draws Mark Antony out of the way.

[*Exeunt* ANTONY and TREBONIUS. CÆSAR and the
Senators take their seats.]

Dec. Where is Metellus Cimber? Let him go,
And presently prefer his suit to Cæsar.

Bru. He is address'd:³ press near and second him.

Cin. Casca, you are the first that rears your hand.

Casca. Are we all ready?⁴

Cæs. What is now amiss
That Cæsar and his Senate must redress?

Met. Most high, most mighty, and most puissant Cæsar,
Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat

An humble heart, — [Kneeling.

Cæs. I must prevent thee, Cimber
These couchings and these lowly courtesies⁵

Might fire the blood of ordinary men,

And turn pre-ordinance and first decree

Into the law of children.⁶ Be not fond,

To think that Cæsar bears such rebel blood

That will be thaw'd from the true quality

With that which melteth fools; I mean, sweet words,

Low-crooked curtsies, and base spaniel fawning.

Thy brother by decree is banished:

If thou dost bend, and pray, and fawn for him,

I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.

Know, Cæsar doth not wrong; nor without cause

Will he be satisfied.⁷

³ *Address'd is ready, prepared*; often so used.

⁴ In the original these words begin the following speech of Cæsar. Ritson first suggested that they properly belonged to one of the conspirators. The change is made in Collier's second folio, assigning the words to Casca; which is probably right, as he was to lead off in the enterprise of stabbing.

⁵ Among the proper senses of to *couch*, Richardson gives "to lower, to stoop, to bend down;" and he says that "to *couch* and to *lower* have similar applications, and probably the same origin."

⁶ "Pre-ordinance and first decree" is the ruling or enactment of the highest authority in the State. "The law of children" here referred to is, as soon as they have done a thing, to turn round and undo it, or to build a house of blocks or cobs for the mere fun of knocking it over. — "Be not *fond*" is, "be not *foolish*;" the common meaning of the word in Shakespeare's time. The force of *so* and *as* is to be understood in the sentence.

⁷ Cæsar is made to speak quite out of character here, and in a strain of hateful arrogance, in order, apparently, to soften the hideous enormity of his murder, and to grind the daggers of the assassins to a still sharper point. Perhaps, also, it was a part of the irony already noted, to put the haughtiest words in great Cæsar's mouth just on the eve of his fall. — It may be

Met. Is there no voice more worthy than my own,
To sound more sweetly in great Cæsar's ear
For the repealing of my banish'd brother?

Br. I kiss thy hand, but not in flattery, Cæsar;
Desiring thee that Publius Cimber may
Have an immediate freedom of repeal.

Cæs. What, Brutus!

Cass. Pardon, Cæsar; Cæsar, pardon
As low as to thy foot doth Cassius fall,
To beg enfranchisement for Publius Cimber.

Cæs. I could be well mov'd, if I were as you;
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me:⁸
• But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks,
They are all fire, and every one doth shine;
But there's but one in all doth hold his place:
So in the world; 'tis furnish'd well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;⁹
Yet in the number I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshak'd of motion;¹⁰ and that I am he,
Let me a little show it even in this, —
That I was constant Cimber should be banish'd,
And constant do remain to keep him so.

Cin. O Cæsar, —

Cæs. Hence! wilt thou lift up Olympus?

Dec. Great Cæsar, —

Cæs. Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

Casca. Speak, hands, for me!

[CASCA stabs CÆSAR in the Neck. CÆSAR catches hold of his Arm. He is then stabbed by several other Conspirators, and at last by MARCUS BRUTUS.¹¹

well to add, that the carrying of deadly weapons was unlawful in Rome; but every educated citizen carried a stylus in a sheath; and on this occasion the assassins had daggers hidden in their stylus-cases.

⁸ If I could seek to move others by prayers, then I were capable of being myself moved by the prayers of others.

⁹ *Apprehensive* is *intelligent*, *capable of apprehending*.

¹⁰ "Unshak'd of motion" is simply *unmoved*, or *not subject to motion*. In the Poet's time *of* was often used instead of *by*, to express the agent. So, continually, in the Bible; as in the axiomatic saying, "Wisdom is justified of her children." Also, "He that loveth Me shall be loved of my Father."

¹¹ The original stage direction is merely, *they stab Cæsar*. That in the text was formed by Malone and others from Plutarch and Suetonius, and has grown to be universally received.

Cæs. *Et tu, Brute?*¹³ — Then fall, Cæsar!

[*Dies.* *The Senators and People retire in confusion.*

Cin. Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead! —
Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets.

Cass. Some to the common pulpits, and cry out,
*Liberty, freedom, and enfranchisement!*¹³

Br. People, and Senators, be not affrighted;
Fly not; stand still: — ambition's debt is paid.

Casca. Go to the pulpit, Brutus.

Dec.

And Cassius too.

Br. Where's Publius?

Cin. Here, quite confounded with this mutiny.

Met. Stand fast together, lest some friend of Cæsar's
Should chance —

Br. Talk not of standing. — Publius, good cheer!
There is no harm intended to your person,
Nor to no Roman else: so tell them, Publius.

Cass. And leave us, Publius; lest that the people,
Rushing on us, should do your age some mischief.

Br. Do so; — and let no man abide this deed,
But we the doers.

Re-enter TREBONIUS.

Cass. Where's Antony?

Tre.

Fled to his house amaz'd.

Men, wives, and children stare, cry out, and run
As it were doomsday.

Br.

Fates, we will know your pleasures: —
That we shall die, we know; 'tis but the time,
And drawing days out, that men stand upon.

Casca. Why, he that cuts off twenty years of life
Cuts off so many years of fearing death.¹⁴

Br. Grant that, and then is death a benefit:

¹³ There is no classical authority for putting these words into the mouth of Cæsar; and the English equivalent, *Thou too, Brutus*, sounds so much better, that it seems a pity the Poet did not write so. The historians, however, relate that Cæsar defended himself with his stylus, till he saw Brutus in the press of assassins, with the steel flashing in his hand also, and then gave up, and bowed his body to the strokes of the illustrious saints. Cæsar had been as a father to Brutus, who was fifteen years his junior; and the Greek, *Kai su teknon*, "You too, my son," which Dion and Suetonius put into his mouth, though probably unauthentic, is good enough to be true.

¹³ This is somewhat in the style of Caliban when he gets glorious with "celestial liquor," *The Tempest*, ii. 2: "Freedom, hey-day! hey-day, freedom! freedom, hey-day, freedom!"

¹⁴ This is the last speech we have from Casca, and this is rightly characteristic of him; yet some editors have unaccountably transferred it to Cassius

So are we Cæsar's friends, that have abridg'd
His time of fearing death. — Stoop, Romans, stoop,
And let us bathe our hands in Cæsar's blood
Up to the elbows, and besmear our swords :
Then walk we forth, even to the market-place,
And, waving our red weapons o'er our heads,
Let's all cry, *Peace, Freedom, and Liberty!*

Cass. Stoop, then, and wash. — How many ages hence
Shall this our lofty scene be acted o'er
In States unborn and accents yet unknown !

Bru. How many times shall Cæsar bleed in sport,
That now on Pompey's basis lies along ¹⁵
No worthier than the dust !

Cass. So oft as that shall be,
So often shall the knot of us be call'd
The men that gave their country liberty. ¹⁶

Dec. What, shall we forth ?

Cass. Ay, every man away :
Brutus shall lead ; and we will grace his heels
With the most boldest and best hearts of Rome.

Bru. Soft ! who comes here ?

Enter a Servant.

A friend of Antony's.

Serv. Thus, Brutus, did my master bid me kneel ;
Thus did Mark Antony bid me fall down ;
And, being prostrate, thus he bade me say :
Brutus is noble, wise, valiant, and honest ;
Cæsar was mighty, bold, royal, and loving ;
Say I love Brutus, and I honour him ;
Say I fear'd Cæsar, honour'd him, and lov'd him.
If Brutus will vouchsafe that Antony
May safely come to him, and be resolv'd ¹⁷
How Cæsar hath deserv'd to lie in death,
Mark Antony shall not love Cæsar dead
So well as Brutus living ; but will follow

¹⁵ So it was in fact: Cæsar fell at the pedestal of Pompey's statue; the statue itself dripping with the blood that spouted from him.

¹⁶ These three speeches, vain-gloriously anticipating the stage celebrity of the deed, are very strange; and, unless there be a shrewd, delicate irony lurking in them, I am at a loss to understand the purpose of them. Their effect on my mind has long been to give a very ambitious air to the work of these professional patriots, and to cast a highly theatrical colour on their alleged virtue; as if they had sought to immortalize themselves by "striking the foremost man of all this world." And this accords with one of Merivale's close remarks about Brutus, calling him "the pedantic aspirant to philosophic renown."

¹⁷ *Resolved* was often used in the sense of *informed* or *assured*.

The fortunes and affairs of noble Brutus
Thorough the hazards of this untrod state¹⁸
With all true faith. So says my master Antony.

Bru. Thy master is a wise and valiant Roman;
I never thought him worse.

Tell him, so please him come unto this place,
He shall be satisfied; and, by my honour,
Depart untouch'd.

Serv. I'll fetch him presently.

[*Exit.*]

Bru. I know that we shall have him well to friend.

Cass. I wish we may; but yet have I a mind
That fears him much, and my misgiving still
Falls shrewdly to the purpose.

Bru. But here comes Antony.—

Re-enter ANTONY.

Welcome, Mark Antony.

Ant. O, mighty Cæsar! dost thou lie so low?
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,
Shrunk to this little measure? Fare thee well.—
I know not, gentlemen, what you intend,
Who else must be let blood, who else is rank:¹⁹
If I myself, there is no hour so fit
As Cæsar's death-hour; nor no instrument
Of half that worth as those your swords, made rich
With the most noble blood of all this world.
I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard,
Now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and smoke,
Fulfil your pleasure. Live a thousand years,
I shall not find myself so apt to die:
No place will please me so, no mean of death,
As here by Cæsar, and by you cut off,
The choice and master spirits of this age.

Bru. O, Antony, beg not your death of us.
Though now we must appear bloody and cruel,
As, by our hands and this our present act,
You see we do; yet see you but our hands,
And this the bleeding business they have done:
Our hearts you see not; they are pitiful;
And pity to the general wrong of Rome—

¹⁸ *Thorough* and *through* are but different forms of the same word. The Poet repeatedly has *thorough* for *through* and also *thoroughly* for *thoroughly*. The usage is common in the Bible.

¹⁹ Who else may be supposed to have *overtopped* his equals, and *grown too high* for the public safety. So, in the speech of Oliver in *As You Like It*, i. 1, when incensed at the high bearing of Orlando: "Is it even so? begin you to grow upon me? I will physic your rankness."

As fire drives out fire,²⁰ so pity pity —
 Hath done this deed on Cæsar. For your part,
 To you our swords have leaden points, Mark Antony,
 Our arms no strength of malice;²¹ and our hearts,
 Of brothers' temper, do receive you in
 With all kind love, good thoughts, and reverence.

Cass. Your voice shall be as strong as any man's
 In the disposing of new dignities.²²

Bru. Only be patient till we have appeas'd
 The multitude, beside themselves with fear,
 And then we will deliver you the cause,
 Why I, that did love Cæsar when I struck him,
 Have thus proceeded.

Ant. I doubt not of your wisdom.
 Let each man render me his bloody hand:
 First, Marcus Brutus, will I shake with you; —
 Next, Caius Cassius, do I take your hand; —
 Now, Decius Brutus, yours; — now yours, Metellus; —
 Yours, Cinna; — and, my valiant Casca, yours; —
 Though last, not least in love, yours, good Trebonius.
 Gentlemen all, — alas, what shall I say?
 My credit now stands on such slippery ground,
 That one of two bad ways you must conceit me,²³
 Either a coward or a flatterer. —
 That I did love thee, Cæsar, O, 'tis true:
 If, then, thy spirit look upon us now,
 Shall it not grieve thee dearer than thy death,²⁴
 To see thy Antony making his peace,
 Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes, —

²⁰ *Fire* is another of the words which Shakespeare uses as one or two syllables indifferently, to suit his verse. Here the first *fire* is two syllables, the second one. — The allusion is to the old way of salving a burn by holding it up to the fire. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 2: "Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning; one pain is lessen'd by another's anguish."

²¹ In the old copies, this clause is disjoined from the preceding part of the sentence, linked to the following, and printed thus: "Our arms *in* strength of malice, and our hearts of brothers' temper, do receive you in," &c. It seems hardly possible to squeeze any consistent meaning out of the words, "our arms *in* strength of malice," as thus ordered. The changing of *in* into *no* was proposed by Stevens, approved by Singer, and seems required by the rest of the sentence. Dyce adopts it.

²² This little speech is charmingly characteristic. Brutus has been talking about "our hearts," and "kind love, good thoughts, and reverence." To Cassius, all that is mere rose-water humbug, and he knows it is so to Antony too. He therefore hastens to put in such motives as he knows will have weight with Antony, as they also have with himself. Cassius was another of the stabbers to whom Cæsar had prospectively assigned a province, and who was more than willing to take it on that authority.

²³ *Conceive of me.* See page 449, note 20.

²⁴ The Poet uses *dear* repeatedly in the same way as here. See page 36, note 2, and page 237, note 6.

Most noble! — in the presence of thy corse?
 Had I as many eyes as thou hast wounds,
 Weeping as fast as they stream forth thy blood,
 It would become me better than to close
 In terms of friendship with thine enemies.
 Pardon me, Julius! Here wast thou bay'd, brave heart;²⁵
 Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
 Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.²⁶ —
 O world, thou wast the forest to this hart;
 And this indeed, O world, the heart of thee.²⁷ —
 How like a deer, stricken by many princes,
 Dost thou here lie!

Cass. Mark Antony, —

Ant.

Pardon me, Caius Cassius:

The enemies of Cæsar shall say this;
 Then, in a friend, it is cold modesty.

Cass. I blame you not for praising Cæsar so;
 But what compæct mean you to have with us?²⁸
 Will you be prick'd in number of our friends;
 Or shall we on, and not depend on you?

Ant. Therefore I took your hands;²⁹ but was indeed
 Sway'd from the point, by looking down on Cæsar.
 Friends am I with you all, and love you all;
 Upon this hope, that you shall give me reasons
 Why and wherein Cæsar was dangerous.

Bru. Or else were this a savage spectacle.
 Our reasons are so full of good regard,
 That were you, Antony, the son of Cæsar,
 You should be satisfied.

Ant.

That's all I seek:

And am moreover suitor that I may
 Produce his body to the market-place;³⁰
 And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend,
 Speak in the order of his funeral.

Bru. You shall, Mark Antony.

Cass.

Brutus, a word with you.

²⁵ *Bay'd* is barked at, worried, and pursued, as a deer by hounds.

²⁶ *Lethe* is used by many old writers for death.

²⁷ Coleridge gives out a strong opinion that these two lines were interpolated by some actor, and that we have but to read the passage without them, to see this. The lines are certainly a blemish in the passage; but to my thinking, they have too many brothers and sisters to admit of their being criticised out of the family.

²⁸ Shakespeare often has *compact*, *aspect*, and other like words, with the second syllable long. — *Prick'd* in the next line, is *marked*. The image is of a list of names written out, and some of them distinguished by having holes pricked in the paper against them.

²⁹ *Therefore* is not the illative conjunction here; but means *to that end*, or *for that purpose*.

³⁰ *Produce* in the Latin sense of *produco*; implying motion to a place.

[*Aside to BRU.*] You know not what you do: do not consent
That Antony speak in his funeral.
Know you how much the people may be mov'd
By that which he will utter?

Bru. [*Aside to CASS.*] By your pardon:
I will myself into the pulpit first,
And show the reason of our Cæsar's death:
What Antony shall speak I will protest
He speaks by leave and by permission;
And that we are contented Cæsar shall
Have all due rights and lawful ceremonies.
It shall advantage more than do us wrong.⁸¹

Cass. [*Aside to BRU.*] I know not what may fall; I like it
not.

Bru. Mark Anton, here, take you Cæsar's body.
You shall not in your funeral speech blame us,
But speak all good you can devise of Cæsar;
And say you do't by our permission;
Else shall you not have any hand at all
About his funeral: and you shall speak
In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
After my speech is ended.

Ant. Be it so;
I do desire no more.

Bru. Prepare the body, then, and follow us.

[*Exeunt all but ANTONY*]

Ant. O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of times.
Woe to the hands that shed this costly blood!
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,—
Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue,—
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;⁸²
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
Blood and destruction shall be so in use,

⁸¹ *Wrong* is here used for *harm*, or that which causes pain. The radical sense of the word survives in *wring* and *writh*. See, also, page 132, note 5. Note the high self-appreciation of Brutus here, in supposing that if he can but have a chance to speak to the people, and to air his wisdom before them, all will go right. Here, again, he overbears Cassius, who now begins to find the effects of having baited him with flatteries, and served as a mirror to "turn his hidden worthiness into his eye."

⁸² By *men* Antony means not mankind in general; the scope of the curse being limited by the subsequent words, "the parts of Italy," and "in these confines."—*Limbs* is merely the figure of speech called *Synecdoche*, or the putting of a part of a thing for the whole. Dyce changes it to *minds*.

And dreadful objects so familiar,
 That mothers shall but smile when they behold
 Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war;
 All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds.
 And Cæsar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
 With Até by his side²³ come hot from Hell,
 Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice
 Cry *Havoc*! and let slip the dogs of war;²⁴
 That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
 With carrion men, groaning for burial. —

Enter a Servant.

You serve Octavius Cæsar, do you not?

Serv. I do, Mark Antony.

Ant. Cæsar did write for him to come to Rome.

Serv. He did receive his letters, and is coming;
 And bid me say to you by word of mouth, —

[*Seeing the Body.*] O Cæsar! —

Ant. Thy heart is big, get thee apart and weep.
 Passion, I see, is catching; for mine eyes,
 Seeing those beads of sorrow stand in thine,
 Begin to water. Is thy master coming?

Serv. He lies to-night within seven leagues of Rome.

Ant. Post back with speed, and tell him what hath chanc'd.
 Here is a mourning Rome, a dangerous Rome,
 No Rome of safety for Octavius yet:²⁵
 Hie hence, and tell him so. Yet stay awhile;
 Thou shalt not back till I have borne this corse
 Into the market-place: there shall I try,
 In my oration, how the people take
 The cruel issue of these bloody men;
 According to the which, thou shalt discourse
 To young Octavius of the state of things.
 Lend me your hand. [*Exeunt with CÆSAR'S Body.*]

²³ Até is the old goddess of discord and mischief. So, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, ii. 1, Benedick describes Beatrice as "the infernal Até in good apparel."

²⁴ *Havoc* was anciently the word of signal for giving no quarter in a battle. It was a high crime for any one to give the signal without authority from the general-in-chief; hence the peculiar force of *monarch's voice*. — To let slip a dog was a term of the chase, for releasing the hounds from the leash or slip of leather whereby they were held in hand till it was time to let them pursue the animal. — The *dogs of war* are fire, sword, and famine. So, in *King Henry V*, first Chorus: "At his heels, leashed in like hounds, should famine, sword, and fire, crouch for employment."

²⁵ Another play on *Rome* and *room*. See page 439, note 22.

SCENE II. *The Same. The Forum.*

*Enter BRUTUS and CASSIUS, with a Throng of Citizens.*¹

Citizens. We will be satisfied; let us be satisfied.

Bru. Then follow me, and give me audience, friends.—
Cassius, go you into the other street,
And part the numbers.—
Those that will hear me speak, let 'em stay here;
Those that will follow Cassius, go with him;
And public reason shall be rendered
Of Cæsar's death.

1 *Cit.* I will hear Brutus speak.

2 *Cit.* I will hear Cassius; and compare their reasons,
When severally we hear them rendered.

[*Exit CASSIUS, with some of the Citizens.*
BRUTUS goes into the Rostrum.

3 *Cit.* The noble Brutus is ascended: Silence!

Bru. Be patient till the last.

Romans, countrymen, and lovers!² hear me for my cause; and be silent, that you may hear: believe me for mine honour; and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe: censure me in your wisdom;³ and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Cæsar's, to him I say that Brutus' love to Cæsar was no less than his. If, then, that friend demand why Brutus rose against Cæsar, this is my answer,—Not that I lov'd Cæsar less, but that I lov'd Rome more. Had you rather Cæsar were living, and die all slaves, than that Cæsar were dead, to live all freemen? As Cæsar lov'd me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

Citizens. None, Brutus, none.

Bru. Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Cæsar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of his

¹ The original has *Plebeians* here instead of *Citizens*. Modern editions generally print *Citizens*.

² *Lover* and *friend* were used as synonymous in the Poet's time. Brutus afterwards speaks of Cæsar as "my best lover."

³ *Censure* is here exactly equivalent to *judge*; probably used for the jingle it makes with *senses*.

death is enroll'd in the Capitol;⁴ his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy;⁵ nor his offences enforc'd, for which he suffered death.

Enter ANTONY and Others, with CÆSAR's Body.

Here comes his body, mourn'd by Mark Antony; who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth; as which of you shall not? With this I depart, — That, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.⁶

Citizens. Live, Brutus! live, live!

1 *Cit.* Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

2 *Cit.* Give him a statue with his ancestors.

3 *Cit.* Let him be Cæsar.

4 *Cit.*

Cæsar's better parts

Shall now be crown'd in Brutus.

1 *Cit.* We'll bring him to his house with shouts and clamours.

Bru. My countrymen, —

2 *Cit.*

Peace! silence! Brutus speaks.

1 *Cit.* Peace, ho!

Bru. Good countrymen, let me depart alone;

And, for my sake, stay here with Antony:

Do grace to Cæsar's corpse, and grace his speech

Tending to Cæsar's glory; which Mark Antony,

By our permission, is allow'd to make.

I do entreat you, not a man depart,

Save I alone, till Antony have spoke.

[*Exit.*]

1 *Cit.* Stay, ho! and let us hear Mark Antony.

3 *Cit.* Let him go up into the public chair;

We'll hear him. — Noble Antony, go up.

⁴ The reason of his death is made a matter of solemn official record in the books of the Senate, as showing that the act of killing him was done for public ends, and not from private hate.

⁵ His fame is not *lessened* or *whittled down* in those points wherein he was worthy. — *Enforc'd*, in the next clause, is in antithesis to *extenuated*, meaning that his faults are not magnified or forced out of just measure. This is very aptly said; for to kill a man, and then try to belittle or to blacken him, is the extreme of turpitude.

⁶ In this celebrated speech, which, to my taste, is far from being a model of style either for oratory or any thing else, the Poet seems to have aimed at imitating the manner actually ascribed to Brutus. So, in *Plutarch*: "They do note that, in some of his Epistles, he counterfeited that brief compendious manner of speech of the Lacedæmonians." And Shakespeare's idea, as followed out in this speech, is sustained also by the *Dialogus de Oratoribus*, ascribed to Tacitus; wherein it is said that Brutus' style of eloquence was censured as *otiosum et disjunctum*. For, as Mr. Verplanck remarks, "the *disjunctum*, the broken-up style, without oratorical continuity, is precisely that assumed by the dramatist."

Ant. For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you. [*Goes up.*]

4 *Cit.* What does he say of Brutus?

3 *Cit.* He says, for Brutus' sake,

He finds himself beholding to us all.

4 *Cit.* 'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here.

1 *Cit.* This Cæsar was a tyrant.

3 *Cit.* Nay, that's certain :

We're bless'd, that Rome is rid of him.

2 *Cit.* Peace! let us hear what Antony can say.

Ant. You gentle Romans, —

Citizens. Peace, ho! let us hear him.

Ant. Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears :

I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them ;

The good is oft interred with their bones :

So let it be with Cæsar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Cæsar was ambitious :⁷

If it were so, it was a grievous fault ;

And grievously hath Cæsar answer'd it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest, —

For Brutus is an honourable man ;

So are they all, all honourable men, —

Come I to speak in Cæsar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me :

But Brutus says he was ambitious ;

And Brutus is an honourable man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,

Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill :

Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious ?

When that the poor have cried, Cæsar hath wept :

Ambition should be made of sterner stuff :

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious ;

And Brutus is an honourable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal

I thrice presented him a kingly crown,

Which he did thrice refuse Was this ambition ?

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious ;

And, sure, he is an honourable man.⁸

⁷ In Shakespeare's time, the ending *tious*, and various others like it, when occurring at the end of a verse, was often pronounced as two syllables. The same was the case with *tion*, *sion*, and divers others. Many instances of the latter have already occurred in this play; as in the preceding scene: "And say you do't by our *permission*." Also in a former scene: "Out of the teeth of *emulation*." Nevertheless I am far from thinking that *tious* should now be sounded as two syllables in such cases. See page 53, note 19.

⁸ Of course these repetitions of *honourable man* are intensely ironical; and for that very reason the irony should be studiously kept out of the voice in pronouncing them. I have heard the effect of it utterly spoilt by being

I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
 But here I am, to speak what I do know.
 You all did love him once, — not without cause :
 What cause withholds you, then, to mourn for him ? —
 O judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts,⁹
 And men have lost their reason ! — Bear with me ;
 My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,
 And I must pause till it come back to me.

1 *Cit.* Methinks there is much reason in his sayings.

2 *Cit.* If thou consider rightly of the matter,
 Cæsar has had great wrong.

3 *Cit.* Has he not, masters ?
 I fear there will a worse come in his place.

4 *Cit.* Mark'd ye his words ? He would not take the crown ;
 Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.

1 *Cit.* If it be found so, some will dear abide it.¹⁰

2 *Cit.* Poor soul ! his eyes are red as fire with weeping.

3 *Cit.* There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony

4 *Cit.* Now mark him ; he begins again to speak.

Ant. But yesterday the word of Cæsar might
 Have stood against the world : now lies he there,
 And none so poor to do him reverence.
 O masters, if I were dispos'd to stir
 Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
 I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
 Who, you all know, are honourable men.
 I will not do them wrong : I rather choose
 To wrong the dead, to wrong myself, and you,
 Than I will wrong such honourable men.
 But here's a parchment with the seal of Cæsar, —
 I found it in his closet, — 'tis his will :
 Let but the commons hear this testament,
 (Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,)
 And they would go and kiss dead Cæsar's wounds,
 And dip their napkins in his sacred blood ;¹¹
 Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
 And, dying, mention it within their wills,
 Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
 Unto their issue.

emphasized. The proper force and charm of the irony in this case depend on its being completely disguised and *seeming* perfectly unconscious.

⁹ *Brutish* is by no means tautological here: the antithetic sense of *human* beasts is most artfully implied.

¹⁰ To *abide* or *aby* a thing, is to *suffer* for it, or, as we now say, to *pay* for it. So, in a previous scene: "Let no man *abide* this deed, but we the doers."

¹¹ *Napkin* and *Handkerchief* were used indifferently in the Poet's time

4 *Cit.* We'll hear the will: read it, Mark Antony.

Citizens. The will, the will! we will hear Cæsar's will.

Ant. Have patience, gentle friends; I must not read it:

It is not meet you know how Cæsar lov'd you.

You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;

And, being men, hearing the will of Cæsar,

It will inflame you, it will make you mad.

'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs;

For, if you should, O, what would come of it!

4 *Cit.* Read the will! we'll hear it, Antony;

You shall read us the will, — Cæsar's will!

Ant. Will you be patient? will you stay awhile?

I have o'ershot myself, to tell you of it.

I fear I wrong the honourable men

Whose daggers have stabb'd Cæsar; ¹² I do fear it.

4 *Cit.* They were traitors: honourable men!

Citizens. The will! the testament!

2 *Cit.* They were villains, murderers. The will! read the will!

Ant. You will compel me, then, to read the will?

Then make a ring about the corpse of Cæsar,

And let me show you him that made the will.

Shall I descend? and will you give me leave?

Citizens. Come down.

2 *Cit.* Descend.

[*He comes down*]

3 *Cit.* You shall have leave.

4 *Cit.* A ring! stand round.

1 *Cit.* Stand from the hearse; stand from the body.

2 *Cit.* Room for Antony! — most noble Antony!

Ant. Nay, press not so upon me; stand far' off.

Citizens. Stand back; room! bear back.

Ant. If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

You all do know this mantle: I remember

The first time ever Cæsar put it on;

'Twas on a Summer's evening, in his tent,

That day he overcame the Nervii.¹³

Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through:

¹² Antony now sees that he has the people wholly with him, so that he is perfectly safe in stabbing the stabbers with these terrible words.

¹³ This is the artfullest and most telling stroke in Antony's speech. The Romans prided themselves most of all upon their military virtue and renown: Cæsar was their greatest military hero; and his victory over the Nervii was his greatest military exploit. It occurred during his second campaign in Gaul, in the Summer of the year B. C. 57, and is narrated with surpassing vividness in the second book of his *Bellum Gallicum*. Of course the matter about the "mantle" is purely fictitious: Cæsar had on the civic gown, not the military cloak, when killed: and it was, in fact, the mangled toga that Antony displayed on this occasion: but the fiction has the effect of making the allusion to the victory seem perfectly artless and incidental.

See what a rent the envious Casca made :
 Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd ;
 And, as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,
 Mark how the blood of Cæsar follow'd it, —
 As rushing out of doors, to be resolv'd
 If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no ;¹⁴
 For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel :¹⁵
 Judge, O you gods, how dearly Cæsar lov'd him !
 This was the most unkindest cut of all ;
 For, when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,
 Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
 Quite vanquish'd him : then burst his mighty heart ;
 And, in his mantle muffling up his face,
 Even at the base of Pompey's statua,
 Which all the while ran blood,¹⁶ great Cæsar fell.
 O, what a fall was there, my countrymen !
 Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
 Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.
 O, now you weep ; and, I perceive, you feel
 The dint of pity : these are gracious drops.
 Kind souls, what, weep you, when you but behold
 Our Cæsar's vesture wounded ? Look you here,
 Here is himself, marr'd, as you see, with traitors.¹⁷

1 *Cit.* O piteous spectacle !

2 *Cit.* O noble Cæsar !

3 *Cit.* O woeful day !

4 *Cit.* O traitors, villains !

1 *Cit.* O most bloody sight !

2 *Cit.* We will be reveng'd.

Citizens. Revenge, — about, — seek, — burn, — fire, — kill,
 — slay, — let not a traitor live !

Ant. Stay, countrymen.

1 *Cit.* Peace there ! hear the noble Antony.

2 *Cit.* We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll die with
 him.

Ant. Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up
 To such a sudden flood of mutiny.
 They that have done this deed are honourable :

¹⁴ *Resolv'd* again in the sense of *informed* or *assured*. See page 470, note 17. — The fanciful conceit expressed in these two lines seems quite out of place, and might well be spared.

¹⁵ *Angel* here means, apparently, his counterpart, genius, or a kind of dearer self. The word is probably used with the same meaning by St. Luke in *Acts* xii. 15.

¹⁶ So, in North's *Plutarch*: "Against the very base whereon Pompey's image stood, which ran all a gore of blood, till he was slain."

¹⁷ The Poet has many like instances of *with* being used instead of *by*, to denote the relation of agent.

What private griefs they have,¹⁸ alas, I know not,
 That made them do't; they're wise and honourable,
 And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.
 I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:
 I am no orator, as Brutus is;
 But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
 That love my friend; and that they know full well
 That gave me public leave to speak of him.
 For I have neither wit,¹⁹ nor words, nor worth,
 Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
 To stir men's blood: I only speak right on;
 I tell you that which you yourselves do know;
 Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor, poor dumb mouths,
 And bid them speak for me: but were I Brutus,
 And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
 Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
 In every wound of Cæsar, that should move
 The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

Citizens. We'll mutiny.

1 *Cit.* We'll burn the house of Brutus.

3 *Cit.* Away, then! come, seek the conspirators.

Ant. Yet hear me, countrymen; yet hear me speak.

Citizens. Peace, ho! hear Antony; most noble Antony.

Ant. Why, friends, you go to do you know not what.

Wherein hath Cæsar thus deserv'd your loves?

Alas, you know not; I must tell you, then:

You have forgot the will I told you of.

Citizens. Most true; the will!—let's stay, and hear the will.

Ant. Here is the will, and under Cæsar's seal.

To every Roman citizen he gives,

To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.²⁰

2 *Cit.* Most noble Cæsar!—we'll revenge his death.

3 *Cit.* O, royal Cæsar!

Ant. Hear me with patience.

Citizens. Peace, ho!

Ant. Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,

His private arbours, and new-planted orchards,

On this side Tyber:²¹ he hath left them you,

¹⁸ Shakespeare often uses *grief* for that which causes grief; that is, *grievance*.

¹⁹ *Wit* formerly meant *understanding*, and was so used by all writers.

²⁰ The *drachma* was a Greek coin, equal to 7d. English. In fact, however, Cæsar left to each citizen three hundred sesterces, equivalent to about \$14; which was practically as good as at least \$100 in our time: no small list for a poor man.

²¹ As this scene lies in the Forum, near the Capitol, Cæsar's gardens are, in fact, on the other side Tyber. But the Poet wrote as he read in *Plutarch*:

And to your heirs for ever: common pleasures,
To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.
Here was a Cæsar! when comes such another?

1 *Cit.* Never, never. — Come, away, away!
We'll burn his body in the holy place,
And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.

Take up the body.

2 *Cit.* Go, fetch fire.

3 *Cit.* Pluck down benches.

4 *Cit.* Pluck down forms, windows, any thing.

[*Exeunt Citizens, with the Body.*]

Ant. Now let it work: — Mischief, thou art afoot,
Take thou what course thou wilt! —

Enter a Servant.

How now, fellow!

Serv. Sir, Octavius is already come to Rome.

Ant. Where is he?

Serv. He and Lepidus are at Cæsar's house.

Ant. And thither will I straight to visit him:
He comes upon a wish. Fortune is merry,
And in this mood will give us any thing.

Serv. I heard 'em say, Brutus and Cassius
Are rid like madmen through the gates of Rome.

Ant. Belike they had some notice of the people,
How I had mov'd them. Bring me to Octavius. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The Same. A Street.*

Enter CINNA the Poet.

Cin. I dreamt to-night that I did feast with Cæsar,
And things unlucky charge my fantasy.¹
I have no will to wander forth of doors,
Yet something leads me forth.

Enter Citizens

1 *Cit.* What is your name?

2 *Cit.* Whither are you going?

3 *Cit.* Where do you dwell?

4 *Cit.* Are you a married man or a bachelor?

¹ "He bequeathed unto every citizen of Rome 75 drachmaes a man, and left his gardens and arbors unto the people, which he had on this side of the river Tyber."

² "Things of ill omen oppress me." Steevens tells of having read in an old treatise on Fortune-telling, that "to dream of being at banquet betokeneth misfortune."

2 *Cit.* Answer every man directly.

1 *Cit.* Ay, and briefly.

4 *Cit.* Ay, and wisely.

3 *Cit.* Ay, and truly; you were best.

Cin. What is my name? Whither am I going? Where do I dwell? Am I a married man or a bachelor? Then, to answer every man directly and briefly, wisely and truly. Wisely I say I am a bachelor.

2 *Cit.* That's as much as to say they are fools that marry:—you'll bear me a bang for that,² I fear. Proceed; directly.

Cin. Directly, I am going to Cæsar's funeral.

1 *Cit.* As a friend, or an enemy?

Cin. As a friend.

2 *Cit.* That matter is answered directly.

4 *Cit.* For your dwelling,—briefly.

Cin. Briefly, I dwell by the Capitol.

3 *Cit.* Your name, sir, truly.

Cin. Truly, my name is Cinna.

1 *Cit.* Tear him to pieces! he's a conspirator.

Cin. I am Cinna the poet, I am Cinna the poet.

4 *Cit.* Tear him for his bad verses, tear him for his bad verses.

Cin. I am not Cinna the conspirator.³

4 *Cit.* It is no matter; his name's Cinna: pluck but his name out of his heart, and turn him going.

3 *Cit.* Tear him, tear him! Come; brands, ho! firebrands! To Brutus', to Cassius'; burn all. Some to Decius' house, and some to Casca's; some to Ligarius': away, go! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I. Rome. A Room in ANTONY'S House.¹

ANTONY, OCTAVIUS, and LEPIDUS, seated at a Table.

Ant. These many, then, shall die; their names are prick'd.

Oct. Your brother too must die: consent you, Lepidus?

² You'll suffer a blow, or catch a knock. *Me* expletive again.

³ This man was Helvius Cinna, one of Cæsar's staunchest adherents. He was mistaken by the infuriated populace for Cornelius Cinna, the Prætor, one of the conspirators, and in spite of his frantic appeals was torn to pieces on the spot.

¹ The place of this scene is not marked in the original; but is shown to be at Rome, by Lepidus being sent to Cæsar's house, and told that he will find his confederates "or here, or at the Capitol." In fact, however, the triumvirs did not meet at Rome to settle the proscription, but on a little island near Mutina. The Poet most likely knew this, as he must have read

Lep. I do consent, —

Oct.

Prick him down, Antony.

Lep. — Upon condition Publius shall not live,

Who is your sister's son, Mark Antony.²

Ant. He shall not live; look, with a spot I damn him.

But, Lepidus, go you to Cæsar's house;

Fetch the will hither, and we shall determine

How to cut off some charge in legacies.

Lep. What, shall I find you here?

Oct. Or here, or at the Capitol.

[*Exit LEPIDUS.*]

Ant. This is a slight unmeritable man,

Meet to be sent on errands: is it fit,

The threefold world divided, he should stand

One of the three to share it?

Oct.

So you thought him;

And took his voice who should be prick'd to die,

In our black sentence and proscription.

Ant. Octavius, I have seen more days than you:

And though we lay these honours on this man,

To ease ourselves of divers slanderous loads,

He shall but bear them as the ass bears gold,

To groan and sweat under the business,

Either led or driven, as we point the way;

And having brought our treasure where we will,

Then take we down his load, and turn him off,

Like to the empty ass, to shake his ears,

And graze in commons.

Oct.

You may do your will;

But he's a tried and valiant soldier.

Ant. So is my horse, Octavius; and for that

I do appoint him store of provender.

It is a creature that I teach to fight,

To wind, to stop, to run directly on,

His corporal motion govern'd by my spirit.

And, in some taste, is Lepidus but so;

He must be taught, and train'd, and bid go forth:

A barren-spirited fellow; one that feeds

On objects, arts, and imitations,

Which, out of use and stal'd by other men,

in *Plutarch* how "all three met together in an island environed round about with a little river." — The time of the scene, historically, was in November, B. C. 48; which makes an interval of some nineteen months between this and the preceding scene.

² Either the Poet or the printer fell into an error here; the true name of this person being not *Publius* but *Lucius*. Thus in *Plutarch's Life of Antonius*: "Cæsar left Cicero to Antonius will; Antonius also forsooke *Lucius* Cæsar, who was his uncle by his mother; and both of them together suffered Lepidus to kill his own brother Paulus."

Begin his fashion :³ do not talk of him,
 But as a property. And now, Octavius,
 Listen great things : Brutus and Cassius
 Are levying powers : we must straight make head ;
 Therefore let our alliance be combin'd,
 Our best friends made, and our best means stretch'd out ;
 And let us presently go sit in council,
 How covert matters may be best disclos'd,
 And open perils surest answered.

Oct. Let us do so ; for we are at the stake,
 And bay'd about with many enemies ;⁴
 And some that smile have in their hearts, I fear,
 Millions of mischiefs.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *Before BRUTUS' Tent, in the Camp near Sardis.*¹

Drum. Enter BRUTUS, LUCILIUS, TITINIUS, and Soldiers,
 PINDARUS meeting them ; LUCIUS at some distance.

Bru. Stand, ho !

Lucil. Give the word, ho ! and stand.

Bru. What now, Lucilius ! is Cassius near ?

Lucil. He is at hand ; and Pindarus is come
 To do you salutation from his master.

[PINDARUS gives a Letter to BRUTUS.]

Bru. He greets me well. — Your master, Pindarus,
 In his own change,² or by ill officers,
 Hath given me some worthy cause to wish
 Things done, undone ; but, if he be at hand,
 I shall be satisfied.

Pin. I do not doubt
 But that my noble master will appear
 Such as he is, full of regard and honour.

Bru. He is not doubted. — A word, Lucilius :
 How he receiv'd you let me be resolv'd.

³ So in Falstaff's account of Justice Shallow, when the latter was at Clement's-inn : " He came ever in the rear-ward of the fashion ; and sung those tunes to the overscutch'd huswives that he heard the carmen whistle, and sware they were his fancies, or his good-nights." The passage in the text has commonly been printed with a (:) after *imitations* ; which gives a wrong sense, as if objects, arts, and imitations in general were meant ; whereas it is only of those particular objects, arts, and imitations, which others have worn out and thrown aside. Instead of *objects, arts*, Mr. Dyce prints *object orts* ; a very bad reading.

⁴ An allusion to bear-baiting. Thus in *Macbeth* v. 7 : " They have tied me to a stake : I cannot fly, but, bear-like, I must fight the course."

¹ This scene, again, is separated from the foregoing, historically, by about a year ; the remaining events of the drama having taken place in the Fall B. C. 42.

² Through some change of mind or of conduct on his part.

Lucil. With courtesy and with respect enough;
But not with such familiar instances,
Nor with such free and friendly conference,
As he hath us'd of old.

Bru. Thou hast describ'd
A hot friend cooling. Ever note, Lucilius,
When love begins to sicken and decay,
It useth an enforced ceremony.
There are no tricks in plain and simple faith:
But hollow men, like horses hot at hand,
Make gallant show and promise of their mettle;
But when they should endure the bloody spur,
They fall their crests, and, like deceitful jades,³
Sink in the trial. Comes his army on?

Lucil. They mean this night in Sardis to be quarter'd:
The greater part, the Horse in general,
Are come with Cassius. *[March within.]*

Bru. Hark! he is arriv'd.—
March gently on to meet him.

Enter CASSIUS and Soldiers.

Cass. Stand, ho!

Bru. Stand, ho! Speak the word along.

Within. Stand!

Within. Stand!

Within. Stand!

Cass. Most noble brother, you have done me wrong.

Bru. Judge me, you gods! wrong I mine enemies?
And if not so, how should I wrong a brother?

Cass. Brutus, this sober form of yours hides wrongs;
And when you do them—

Bru. Cassius, be content;
Speak your griefs softly; I do know you well.
Before the eyes of both our armies here,
Which should perceive nothing but love from us,
Let us not wrangle: bid them move away;
Then in my tent, Cassius, enlarge your griefs,⁴
And I will give you audience.

Cass. Pindarus,
Bid our commanders lead their charges off
A little from this ground.

³ A deceitful jade is an unreliable horse, or one that promises well in appearance, but "sinks in the trial."

⁴ To enlarge is, properly, to set free or to let go at large; here it means speak freely of or unfold.

Bru. Lucius, do you the like; and let no man
Come to our tent, till we have done our conference. —
Lucilius and Titinius, guard our door. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE III. *Within the Tent of BRUTUS.*

Enter BRUTUS and CASSIUS.

Cass. That you have wrong'd me doth appear in this.
You have condemn'd and noted Lucius Pella¹
For taking bribes here of the Sardians;
Wherein my letters,² praying on his side
Because I knew the man, were slighted off.

Bru. You wrong'd yourself to write in such a case.

Cass. In such a time as this it is not meet
That every nice offence should bear his comment.³

Bru. Let me tell you, Cassius, you yourself
Are much condemn'd to have an itching palm;
To sell and mart your offices for gold
To undeservers.

Cass. I an itching palm!
You know that you are Brutus that speak this,
Or, by the gods, this speech were else your last.

Bru. The name of Cassius honours this corruption,
And chastisement doth therefore hide his head.

Cass. Chastisement!

Bru. Remember March, the ides of March remember!
Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake?
What villain touch'd his body, that did stab,
And not for justice? What, shall one of us,
That struck the foremost man of all this world
But for supporting robbers, — shall we now

¹ *Disgraced* him, set a mark or stigma upon him. — The Poet read in *Plutarch* that "Brutus, upon complaint of the Sardians, did condemn and note Lucius Pella, who had been a Prætor of the Romans, for that he was convicted of robbery and pilfery in his office."

² *Wherein* refers to the stigma set upon Pella, and is equivalent to *by which act or proceeding*. — Cassius naturally thinks that "the honourable men whose daggers have stabb'd Cæsar" should not peril their cause by moral squeamishness. And it is a very noteworthy point, that the digesting of that act seems to have entailed upon Brutus a sort of moral dyspepsia.

³ That every *petty* or *trifling* offence should be scrutinized and passed upon. *Nice* was often used in that sense. — In the foregoing plays, I have repeatedly noted the Poet's use of *his* for *its*. Mr. W. J. Rolfe, of Cambridge, has ascertained, by a very close inspection, that Shakespeare has *its* ten times, but in nine of these it is printed with an apostrophe, *it's*; and that he has *it*, used as the possessive case, sixteen times; as in *Hamlet* i. 2: "It lifted up *it* head." As I have stated before, *its* does not occur in our English Bible; where we have, instead, such expressions as, "if the salt have lost *his* savour," and, "to every seed *his* own body."

Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,
And sell the mighty space of our large honours
For so much trash as may be grasped thus?
I had rather be a dog, and bay the Moon,
Than such a Roman.

Cass. Brutus, bait not me,⁴
I'll not endure it: you forget yourself,
To hedge me in; I am a soldier, ay,⁵
Older in practice, abler than yourself
To make conditions.⁶

Bru. Go to; you are not, Cassius.

Cass. I am.

Bru. I say you are not.

Cass. Urge me no more, I shall forget myself;
Have mind upon your health, tempt me no further.

Bru. Away, slight man!

Cass. Is't possible?

Bru. Hear me, for I will speak.
Must I give way and room to your rash choler?
Shall I be frightened when a madman stares?

Cass. O ye gods, ye gods! must I endure all this?

Bru. All this! ay, more: fret, till your proud heart break;
Go show your slaves how choleric you are,
And make your bondmen tremble. Must I budge?
Must I observe you? Must I stand and crouch
Under your testy humour? By the gods,
You shall digest the venom of your spleen,
Though it do split you; for from this day forth
I'll use you for my mirth, yea, for my laughter,
When you are waspish.

Cass. Is it come to this?

Bru. You say you are a better soldier:
Let it appear so; make your vaunting true,
And it shall please me well. For mine own part,
I shall be glad to learn of abler men.⁷

⁴ So in the original; but commonly changed to *bay* in modern editions, the repeating of the word being thought to add spirit to the dialogue. I think otherwise. To *bait* is to worry or harass with violent attacks. Richardson says it is formed regularly from *bay*, to bark at, thus, — *bayed, bay'd, bayt, bait*. In *The Winter's Tale* ii. 3, Leontes says of Paulina, — "A cal-lat, of boundless tongue, who late hath beat her husband, and now *bait*s me!"

⁵ The original and, I believe, all modern editions, have *I* instead of *ay* here. It has long seemed to me that it should be *ay*, and I now venture to give it so. In the Poet's time, the pronoun *I* and the affirmative *ay* were printed alike.

⁶ To do the business, or manage the diplomacy of an army.

⁷ The original has *noble* instead of *abler*. *Noble* does not fit the place, and the use of *abler* by Cassius, a little before, points that out as the right word: accordingly it is adopted by Mr. Dyce.

Cass. You wrong me every way, you wrong me, Brutus;
I said an elder soldier, not a better :⁸
Did I say *better*?

Bru. If you did, I care not.

Cass. When Cæsar liv'd he durst not thus have mov'd me.

Bru. Peace, peace! you durst not so have tempted him.

Cass. I durst not?

Bru. No.

Cass. What, durst not tempt him?

Bru. For your life you durst not.

Cass. Do not presume too much upon my love;
I may do that I shall be sorry for.

Bru. You have done that you should be sorry for.

There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats;

For I am arm'd so strong in honesty,

That they pass by me as the idle wind,

Which I respect not. I did send to you

For certain sums of gold, which you denied me;—

For I can raise no money by vile means:

By Heaven, I had rather coin my heart,

And drop my blood for drachmas, than to wring

From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash

By any indirection:—I did send

To you for gold to pay my legions,

Which you denied me: Was that done like Cassius?

Should I have answer'd Caius Cassius so?

When Marcus Brutus grows so covetous,

To lock such rascal counters from his friends,⁹

Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts,

Dash him to pieces!

Cass. I denied you not.

Bru. You did.

Cass. I did not: he was but a fool

That brought my answer back.—Brutus hath riv'd my heart

A friend should bear his friend's infirmities,

But Brutus makes mine greater than they are.

Bru. I do not, till you practise them on me.

Cass. You love me not.

⁸ This mistake of Brutus is very well conceived. Cassius was much the abler soldier, and Brutus knew it; and the mistake grew from his consciousness of the truth of what he thought he heard. Long before this time, Cassius had served as Quæstor under Marcus Crassus in his expedition against the Parthians; and when the army was torn all to pieces, both Crassus and his son being killed, Cassius displayed great ability in bringing off a remnant; as he also did for some time after that, in the military administration of Syria.

⁹ *Rascal counters* is a term of contempt for the "vile trash," gold. Counters were false pieces of money, used in reckoning and keeping accounts. See page 50, note 8.

Bru. I do not like your faults.

Cass. A friendly eye could never see such faults.

Bru. A flatterer's would not, though they do appear
As huge as high Olympus.

Cass. Come, Antony and young Octavius, come,
Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius,
For Cassius is a-weary of the world;
Hated by one he loves; brav'd by his brother;
Check'd like a bondman; all his faults observ'd,
Set in a note-book, learn'd, and conn'd by rote,
To cast into my teeth. O, I could weep
My spirit from mine eyes!— There is my dagger,
And here my naked breast; within, a heart
Dearer than Plutus' mine, richer than gold:
If that thou be'st a Roman, take it forth;
I, that denied thee gold, will give my heart.
Strike as thou didst at Cæsar; for I know,
When thou didst hate him worst, thou lov'dst him better
Than ever thou lov'dst Cassius.

Bru. Sheath your dagger.
Be angry when you will, it shall have scope;
Do what you will, dishonour shall be humour.¹⁰
O Cassius, you are yoked with a lamb
That carries anger as the flint bears fire;
Who, much enforced, shows a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again.¹¹

Cass. Hath Cassius liv'd
To be but mirth and laughter to his Brutus,
When grief, and blood ill-temper'd, vexeth him?

Bru. When I spoke that, I was ill-temper'd too.

Cass. Do you confess so much? Give me your hand.

Bru. And my heart too.

Cass. O Brutus, —

Bru. What's the matter?

Cass. — Have you not love enough to bear with me,
When that rash humour which my mother gave me
Makes me forgetful?

Bru. Yes, Cassius; and from henceforth,
When you are over earnest with your Brutus,
He'll think your mother chides, and leave you so.

[Noise within.]

¹⁰ Whatever dishonourable thing you may do, I will set it down to the humour or infirmity of the moment.

¹¹ In my boyhood, the idea was common, of fire *sleeping* in the flint, and being awaked by the stroke of the steel. I am not sure whether it was known in the Poet's time, that in fact the flint cuts off microscopic bits of steel, which are ignited by the friction.

Poet. [*Within.*] Let me go in to see the generals:
There is some grudge between 'em; 'tis not meet
They be alone.

Lucil. [*Within.*] You shall not come to them.

Poet. [*Within.*] Nothing but death shall stay me.

Enter Poet, followed by LUCILIUS and TITINIUS.

Cass. How now! What's the matter?

Poet. For shame, you generals! what do you mean?
Love, and be friends, as two such men should be;
For I have seen more years, I'm sure, than ye.

Cass. Ha, ha! how vilely doth this cynic rhyme!

Bru. Get you hence, sirrah; saucy fellow, hence!

Cass. Bear with him, Brutus; 'tis his fashion.

Bru. I'll know his humour, when he knows his time.
What should the wars do with these jiggling fools? —
Companion, hence!¹²

Cass. Away, away, be gone! [*Exit Poet.*]

Bru. Lucilius and Titinius, bid the commanders
Prepare to lodge their companies to-night.

Cass. And come yourselves, and bring Messala with you
Immediately to us. [*Exeunt LUCIL. and TITIN.*]

Bru. Lucius, a bowl of wine!

Cass. I did not think you could have been so angry.

Bru. O Cassius, I am sick of many griefs.

Cass. Of your philosophy you make no use,
If you give place to accidental evils.¹³

Bru. No man bears sorrow better. Portia is dead.

Cass. Ha! Portia!

Bru. She is dead.

Cass. How scap'd I killing, when I cross'd you so? —
O, insupportable and touching loss! —
Upon what sickness?

Bru. Impatient of my absence,
And grief that young Octavius with Mark Antony
Have made themselves so strong; — for with her death
That tidings came; — with this she fell distract,
And, her attendants absent, swallow'd fire.¹⁴

¹² *Jig* signified a ballad or ditty, as well as a dance. *Companion* is here a term of contempt, as we now use *fellow*.

¹³ In his philosophy, Brutus was a mixture of the Stoic and the Platonist. What he says of Portia's death is among the best things in the play, and is in Shakespeare's noblest style. Deep grief loves not many words.

¹⁴ It appears something uncertain whether Portia's death was before or after her husband's. Plutarch represents it as occurring before; but Merivale follows those who place it after. Plutarch's account, as rendered by North, is, that she "took hot burning coals and cast them into her mouth, and kept her mouth so close that she choked herself."

Cass. And died so?

Bru. Even so.

Cass. O, ye immortal gods!

Enter LUCIUS, with Wine and a Taper.

Bru. Speak no more of her. — Give me a bowl of wine: —
In this I bury all unkindness, Cassius. [*Drinks.*]

Cass. My heart is thirsty for that noble pledge. —
Fill, Lucius, till the wine o'erswell the cup;
I cannot drink too much of Brutus' love. [*Drinks.*]

Bru. Come in, Titinius! — [*Exit LUCIUS.*]

Re-enter TITINIUS, with MESSALA.

Welcome, good Messala. —

Now sit we close about this taper here,
And call in question our necessities.¹⁵

Cass. Portia, art thou gone?

Bru. No more, I pray you. —

Messala, I have here received letters,
That young Octavius and Mark Antony
Come down upon us with a mighty power,
Bending their expedition toward Philippi.

Mes. Myself have letters of the selfsame tenour.

Bru. With what addition?

Mes. That, by proscription and bills of outlawry,
Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus,
Have put to death an hundred Senators.

Bru. Therein our letters do not well agree:
Mine speak of seventy Senators that died
By their proscriptions, Cicero being one.

Cass. Cicero one!

Mes. Cicero is dead,
And by that order of proscription. —
Had you your letters from your wife, my lord?

Bru. No, Messala.

Mes. Nor nothing in your letters writ of her?

Bru. Nothing, Messala.

Mes. That, methinks, is strange.

Bru. Why ask you? hear you aught of her in yours?

Mes. No, my lord.

Bru. Now, as you are a Roman, tell me true.

Mes. Then like a Roman bear the truth I tell:
For certain she is dead, and by strange manner.

Bru. Why, farewell, Portia. — We must die Messala:

¹⁵ The Poet repeatedly uses *question* in the sense of *conversation*.

With meditating that she must die once,¹⁶
I have the patience to endure it now.

Mes. Even so great men great losses should endure.

Cass. I have as much of this in art as you,¹⁷
But yet my nature could not bear it so.

Bru. Well, to our work alive. What do you think
Of marching to Philippi presently?

Cass. I do not think it good.

Bru.

Your reason?

Cass.

This it is:

'Tis better that the enemy seek us:

So shall he waste his means, weary his soldiers,
Doing himself offence; whilst we, lying still,
Are full of rest, defence, and nimbleness.

Bru. Good reasons must, of force, give place to better.
The people 'twixt Philippi and this ground
Do stand but in a forc'd affection;
For they have grudg'd us contribution:
The enemy, marching along by them,
By them shall make a fuller number up,
Come on refresh'd, new-aided,¹⁸ and encourag'd;
From which advantage shall we cut him off,
If at Philippi we do face him there,
These people at our back.

Cass.

Hear me, good brother.

Bru. Under your pardon. You must note besides,
That we have tried the utmost of our friends;
Our legions are brimful, our cause is ripe:
The enemy increaseth every day;
We, at the height, are ready to decline.
There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat;
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

Cass.

Then, with your will, go on:
We will along ourselves, and meet them at Philippi.

Bru. The deep of night is crept upon our talk,
And nature must obey necessity;
Which we will niggard with a little rest.
There is no more to say?

¹⁶ *Once* here means *sometime or other*.

¹⁷ *Art* was sometimes used for *theory* as distinguished from *practice*.

¹⁸ The old copies have *new added*. Mr. Dyce and Mr. Singer agree that *new-aided* is unquestionably the right reading.

Cass. No more. Good night:
Early to-morrow will we rise, and hence.

Bru. Lucius, my gown! — Farewell, good Messala : —
Good night, Titinius. — Noble, noble Cassius,
Good night, and good repose.

Cass. O, my dear brother!
This was an ill beginning of the night:
Never come such division 'tween our souls!
Let it not, Brutus.

Bru. Every thing is well.

Cass. Good night, my lord.

Bru. Good night, good brother.

Tit. Mes. Good night, Lord Brutus.

Bru. Farewell, every one. —

[*Exeunt CASSIUS, TITINIUS, and MESSALA.*]

Re-enter LUCIUS, with the Gown.

Give me the gown. Where is thy instrument?

Luc. Here in the tent.

Bru. What, thou speak'st drowsily:
Poor knave, I blame thee not; thou art o'er-watch'd.¹⁹
Call Claudius and some other of my men;
I'll have them sleep on cushions in my tent.

Luc. Varro and Claudius!

Enter VARRO and CLAUDIUS.

Var. Calls my lord?

Bru. I pray you, sirs, lie in my tent, and sleep;
It may be I shall raise you by-and-by
On business to my brother Cassius.

Var. So please you, we will stand and watch your pleasure.

Bru. I will not have it so; lie down, good sirs:
It may be I shall otherwise bethink me. —

Look, Lucius, here's the book I sought for so;

I put it in the pocket of my gown.²⁰ [*Servants lie down.*]

Luc. I was sure your lordship did not give it me.

Bru. Bear with me, good boy; I am much forgetful.
Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?

¹⁹ *Knave* was much used in the Poet's time as a term of endearment; as *fool* and *wretch* also were.

²⁰ I am not sure but these two simple lines are the best thing in the play. Just consider how much is implied in them, and what a picture they give of the earnest, thoughtful, book-loving Brutus. And indeed all his noblest traits of character come out, "in simple and pure soul," in this exquisite scene with Lucius, which is hardly surpassed by any thing in *Shakespeare*.

Luc. Ay, my lord, an't please you.

Bru. It does, my boy :

I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing.

Luc. It is my duty, sir.

Bru. I should not urge thy duty past thy might ;

I know young bloods look for a time of rest.

Luc. I have slept, my lord, already.

Bru. It was well done ; and thou shalt sleep again ;

I will not hold thee long : if I do live,

I will be good to thee. —

[*LUCIUS plays and sings till he falls asleep.*

This is a sleepy tune. — O murderous Slumber,

Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,²¹

That plays thee music ? — Gentle knave, good night ;

I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee.

If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument :

I'll take it from thee ; and, good boy, good night. —

Let me see, let me see ; — is not the leaf turn'd down

Where I left reading ? Here it is, I think. —

Enter the Ghost of CÆSAR.

How ill this taper burns ! — Ha ! who comes here ?

I think it is the weakness of mine eyes

That shapes this monstrous apparition.

It comes upon me. — Art thou any thing ?

Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,

That mak'st my blood cold, and my hair to stare ?²²

Speak to me what thou art.

Ghost. Thy evil spirit, Brutus.

Bru. Why com'st thou ?

Ghost. To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.

Bru. Well ; then I shall see thee again ?

Ghost. Ay, at Philippi.

Bru. Why, I will see thee at Philippi, then.

[*Ghost vanishes*

Now I have taken heart, thou vanishest :²³

²¹ *Mace* was formerly used for *sceptre*. The mace is called *leaden*, from its causing heaviness in the subject of it. — Slumber has the epithet *murderous*, because sleep is regarded as the image of death ; or, as Shelley puts it, "Death and his brother Sleep." — The boy is spoken of as playing music to Slumber, because the purpose of his music is to soothe the perturbations out of his master's mind, and put him to sleep.

²² A singular use of *stare*. Of course it must mean to *stick out*, or, as it is in *Hamlet*, to "*stand on end*, like quills upon the fretful porpentine." We have a similar expression in *The Tempest*, i. 2 : "Ferdinand, with hair *up-staring*, (then like reeds, not hair.)"

²³ This strongly, though quietly, marks the Ghost as altogether *subjective* : as soon as Brutus recovers his firmness, the illusion is broken. The

Ill spirit, I would hold more talk with thee. —

Boy! Lucius! — Varro! Claudius! Sirs, awake! — Claudius!

Luc. The strings, my lord, are false.

Bru. He thinks he still is at his instrument. — Lucius, awake!

Luc. My lord?

Bru. Didst thou dream, Lucius, that thou so cried'st out?

Luc. My lord, I do not know that I did cry.

Bru. Yes, that thou didst. Didst thou see any thing?

Luc. Nothing, my lord.

Bru. Sleep again, Lucius. — Sirrah Claudius! —

[*To VAR.*] Fellow thou, awake!

Var. My lord?

Clau. My lord?

Bru. Why did you so cry out, sirs, in your sleep?

Var. Clau. Did we, my lord?

Bru. Ay: saw you any thing?

Var. No, my lord, I saw nothing.

Clau. Nor I, my lord.

Bru. Go and commend me to my brother Cassius:

Bid him set on his powers betimes before,

And we will follow.

Var. Clau. It shall be done, my lord. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I. *The Plains of Philippi.*

Enter OCTAVIUS, ANTONY, and their Army.

Oct. Now, Antony, our hopes are answered.
You said the enemy would not come down,
But keep the hills and upper regions.
It proves not so: their battles are at hand;¹

order of things is highly judicious here, in bringing the "horrible vision" upon Brutus just after he has heard of Portia's shocking death. With that great sorrow weighing upon him, he might well see ghosts. The thickening of calamities upon him, as the consequences of his stabbing exploit, naturally awakens the power of remorse. The general sense of antiquity touching that matter is well expressed by Plutarch: "Above all, the ghost that appeared unto Brutus showed plainly that the gods were offended with the murder of Cæsar."

¹ *Battle* was used for an *army*, especially an *army embattled*, or ordered in battle-array. The plural is here used with historical correctness, as Brutus and Cassius had each an *army*: the two armies of course co-operating, and acting together as one. And the arrangement was the same on the other side, with Octavius and Antony.

They mean to warn us at Philippi here,²
 Answering before we do demand of them.

Ant. Tut, I am in their bosoms, and I know
 Wherefore they do it: they could be content
 To visit other places; and come down
 With fearful bravery,³ thinking by this face
 To fasten in our thoughts that they have courage;
 But 'tis not so.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Prepare you, generals:
 The enemy comes on in gallant show;
 Their bloody sign of battle is hung out,
 And something to be done immediately.

Ant. Octavius, lead your battle softly on,
 Upon the left hand of the even field.

Oct. Upon the right hand I; keep thou the left.

Ant. Why do you cross me in this exigent?

Oct. I do not cross you; but I will do so.⁴ [*March.*

Drum. *Enter BRUTUS, CASSIUS, and their Army; LUCILIUS, TITINIUS, MESSALA, and Others.*

Bru. They stand, and would have parley.

Cass. Stand fast, Titinius: we must out and talk.

Oct. Mark Antony, shall we give sign of battle?

Ant. No, Cæsar, we will answer on their charge.
 Make forth; the generals would have some words.

Oct. Stir not until the signal.

Bru. Words before blows: — Is it so, countrymen?

Oct. Not that we love words better, as you do.

Bru. Good words are better than bad strokes, Octavius.

² To *warn* is to summon. So in *King John*: "Who is it that hath warn'd us to the walls?" And in *King Richard III.*: "And sent to warn them to his royal presence." And so in some parts of our country it is still common to speak of *warning* people to trainings and town-meetings.

³ Meaning the false show of courage which cowardice sometimes puts on; as in illustration of the adage "A bully is a coward."

⁴ At this time, Octavius was but twenty-one years old, and Antony was almost old enough to be his grandfather. At the time of Cæsar's death, when Octavius was in his nineteenth year, Antony thought he was going to manage him easily and have it all his own way with him, but he found the youngster as stiff as a poker, and could just do nothing with him. Cæsar's youngest sister Julia was married to Marcus Atius Balbus, and their daughter Atia, again, was married to Caius Octavius, a nobleman of the Plebeian order. From this marriage sprung the present Octavius, who afterwards became the Emperor Augustus. He was mainly educated by his great-uncle, was advanced to the Patrician order, and was adopted as his son and heir; so that his full and proper designation at this time was Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus. The text gives a right taste of the man, who always stood firm as a post against Antony, till the latter finally knocked himself to pieces against him.

Ant. In your bad strokes, Brutus, you give good words :
Witness the hole you made in Cæsar's heart,
Crying, *Long live! hail, Cæsar!*

Cass. Antony,
The posture of your blows are yet unknown;
But, for your words, they rob the Hybla bees,⁵
And leave them honeyless.

Ant. Not stingless too.

Bru. O, yes, and soundless too;
For you have stol'n their buzzing, Antony,
And very wisely threat before you sting.

Ant. Villains, you did not so when your vile daggers
Hack'd one another in the sides of Cæsar:
You show'd your teeth like apes, and fawn'd like hounds,
And bow'd like bondmen, kissing Cæsar's feet;
Whilst damned Casca, like a cur, behind
Struck Cæsar on the neck. O, flatterers!

Cass. Flatterers! — Now, Brutus, thank yourself:
This tongue had not offended so to-day,
If Cassius might have rul'd.

Oct. Come, come, the cause: if arguing make us sweat,
The proof of it will turn to redder drops.
Look, —

I draw a sword against conspirators:
When think you that the sword goes up again?
Never, till Cæsar's three-and-thirty wounds
Be well aveng'd;⁶ or till another Cæsar
Have added slaughter to the sword of traitors.⁷

Bru. Cæsar, thou canst not die by traitors' hands,
Unless thou bring'st them with thee.

Oct. So I hope:
I was not born to die on Brutus' sword. •

Bru. O, if thou wert the noblest of thy strain,⁸
Young man, thou could'st not die more honourably.

⁵ *Hybla* was the name of a place in Sicily, noted for the fine flavour of its honey. See page 256, note 5.

⁶ The historical number of Cæsar's wounds is three-and-twenty, and so Shakespeare read it in *Plutarch*. But the poets care little for exactness in such matters. In Beaumont and Fletcher's *Two Noble Gentlemen*, we have "Cæsar's two-and-thirty wounds." — This man, Octavius, has been a standing puzzle and enigma to the historians, from the seeming contradictions of his character. The later writers, however, especially Merivale and Smith, find that the one principle that gave unity to his life and reconciled those contradictions, was a steadfast, inflexible purpose to avenge the murder of his illustrious uncle and adoptive father.

⁷ Till you, traitors as you are, have added the slaughtering of me, another Cæsar, to that of Julius.

⁸ *Strain* is stock, lineage, or race; a common use of the word in Shakespeare's time. So in *King Henry V.* ii. 4: "He is bred out of that bloody straits, that haunted us in our familiar paths."

Cass. A peevish schoolboy, worthless of such honour,
Join'd with a masker and a reveller!⁹

Ant. Old Cassius still!

Oct.

Come, Antony; away!—

Defiance, traitors, hurl we in your teeth:

If you dare fight to-day, come to the field;

If not, when you have stomachs.

[*Exeunt OCTAVIUS, ANTONY, and their Army.*]

Cass. Why, now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark!
The storm is up, and all is on the hazard.

Bru. Ho, Lucilius! hark, a word with you.

Lucil. My lord? [BRUT. and LUCIL. talk apart.]

Cass. Messala,—

Mes.

What says my General?

Cass.

Messala,

This is my birth-day; as this very day
Was Cassius born. Give me thy hand, Messala:
Be thou my witness that against my will,
As Pompey was, am I compell'd to set
Upon one battle all our liberties.¹⁰

You know that I held Epicurus strong,
And his opinion: now I change my mind,
And partly credit things that do presage.
Coming from Sardis, on our former ensign¹¹
Two mighty eagles fell; and there they perch'd,
Gorging and feeding from our soldiers' hands;
Who to Philippi here consorted us:
This morning are they fled away and gone;
And in their steads do ravens, crows, and kites
Fly o'er our heads, and downward look on us,
As we were sickly prey: their shadows seem
A canopy most fatal, under which
Our army lies, ready to give up the ghost.

Mes. Believe not so.

Cass.

I but believe it partly;

For I am fresh of spirit, and resolv'd

To meet all perils very constantly.

⁹ A peevish school-boy, joined with a masker and a reveller, and unworthy even of that honour. The more common meaning of *peevish* was *foolish*.

¹⁰ Alluding to the battle of Pharsalia, which took place in the year B. C. 48. Pompey was forced into that battle, against his better judgment, by the inexperienced and impatient men about him, who, inasmuch as they had more than twice Caesar's number of troops, fancied they could easily crush him up if they could but meet him. So they tried it, and he quickly crunched up them.

¹¹ Former for *first* or *foremost*. The usage is not peculiar to Shakespeare.

Bru. Even so, Lucilius.

Cass. Now, most noble Brutus,
The gods to-day stand friendly, that we may,
Lovers in peace, lead on our days to age!
But, since th' affairs of men rest still uncertain,
Let's reason with the worst that may befall.
If we do lose this battle, then is this
The very last time we shall speak together.
What are you then determined to do?

Bru. Even by the rule of that philosophy
By which I did blame Cato for the death
Which he did give himself; — I know not how,
But I do find it cowardly and vile,
For fear of what might fall, so to prevent
The time of life;¹² — arming myself with patience
To stay the providence of some high powers
That govern us below.

Cass. Then, if we lose this battle,
You are contented to be led in triumph
Thorough the streets of Rome?

Bru. No, Cassius, no: think not, thou noble Roman,
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;
He bears too great a mind.¹³ But this same day
Must end that work the ides of March begun;
And whether we shall meet again I know not.
Therefore our everlasting farewell take: —
For ever, and for ever, farewell, Cassius!
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;
If not, why, then this parting was well made.

Cass. For ever, and for ever, farewell, Brutus!
If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed;
If not, 'tis true this parting was well made.

Bru. Why, then lead on. — O, that a man might know

¹² *Prevent* is here used in the sense of *anticipate*. See page 101, note 14. By *time* is meant the full time, the natural period. — To the understanding of this speech, it must be observed, that the *sense* of the words, "arming myself," &c., follows next after the words, "which he did give himself."

¹³ Brutus here discovers a rather shaky and incoherent state of mind. Was this an oversight in the Poet? or was it meant as a part of the man's character? Probably the latter. The matter is strongly, but, I think, rightly put by Merivale: "The philosopher indeed renounced all confidence in his own principles. He had adopted them from reading or imitation; they were not the natural growth of instinct or genuine reflection; and, as may easily happen in such a case, his faith in them failed when they were tested by adversity. As long as there seemed a chance that the *godlike stroke* would be justified by success, Brutus claimed the glory of maintaining a righteous cause; but when all hope fled, he could take leave of philosophy and life together, and exclaim, *I once dreamed that virtue was a thing; I find her only a name, and the mere slave of fortune*. He had blamed Cato for flying from misery by self-murder; but he learnt to justify the same desperate act when he contemplated committing it himself."

The end of this day's business ere it come!
 But it sufficeth that the day will end,
 And then the end is known. — Come, ho! away! [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *The Same. The Field of Battle.*

Alarum. Enter BRUTUS and MESSALA.

Bru. Ride, ride, Messala, ride, and give these bills
 Unto the legions on the other side.¹
 Let them set on at once; for I perceive
 But cold demeanour in Octavius' wing,
 And sudden push gives them the overthrow.
 Ride, ride, Messala: let them all come down. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE III. *The Same. Another Part of the Field.*

Alarum. Enter CASSIUS and TITINIUS.

Cass. O, look, Titinius, look, the villains fly!
 Myself have to mine own turn'd enemy:
 This ensign here of mine was turning back;
 I slew the coward, and did take it from him.²
Tit. O Cassius, Brutus gave the word too early;
 Who, having some advantage on Octavius,
 Took it too eagerly: his soldiers fell to spoil,
 Whilst we by Antony are all enclos'd.

Enter PINDARUS.

Pin. Fly further off, my lord, fly further off;
 Mark Antony is in your tents, my lord:
 Fly, therefore, noble Cassius, fly far off.
Cass. This hill is far enough. — Look, look, Titinius;
 Are those my tents where I perceive the fire?

Tit. They are, my lord.

Cass. Titinius, if thou lov'st me,
 Mount thou my horse, and hide thy spurs in him,
 Till he have brought thee up to yonder troops,³
 And here again; that I may rest assur'd
 Whether yond troops are friend or enemy.

Tit. I will be here again, even with a thought. [*Exit*]

¹ "The legions on the other side" are those under Cassius. Messala and his escort are met in the next scene by Titinius coming from Cassius.

² *Ensign* was used, as it is still, either for the flag or for the bearer of it; here it is used for both at once. It was in killing the cowardly ensign that Cassius "to his own turn'd enemy."

³ "Yonder troops" are Messala and his escort coming from Brutus.

Cass. Go, Pindarus, get higher on that hill:⁴
My sight was ever thick: regard Titinius,
And tell me what thou not'st about the field. —

[PINDARUS goes up]

This day I breathed first: time is come round,
And where I did begin, there shall I end;
My life is run his compass. — Sirrah, what news?

Pin. [Above.] O, my lord!

Cass. What news?

Pin. Titinius is enclosed round about
With horsemen, that make to him on the spur; —
Yet he spurs on. — Now they are almost on him; —
Now, Titinius! — Now some 'light:⁵ — O, he 'lights too: —
He's ta'en, [Shout.] and, hark! they shout for joy.

Cass. Come down; behold no more. —
O, coward that I am, to live so long,
To see my best friend ta'en before my face! —

PINDARUS descends.

Come hither, sirrah:
In Parthia did I take thee prisoner;
And then I swore thee, saving of thy life,
That whatsoever I did bid thee do,
Thou should'st attempt it. Come now, keep thine oath;
Now be a freeman; and with this good sword,
That ran through Cæsar's bowels, search this bosom.
Stand not to answer: here, take thou the hilts;⁶
And, when my face is cover'd, as 'tis now,
Guide thou the sword. — Cæsar, thou art reveng'd,
Even with the sword that kill'd thee.⁷

[Dies.]

Pin. So, I am free; yet would not so have been,
Durst I have done my will. — O, Cassius!
Far from this country Pindarus shall run,
Where never Roman shall take note of him.

[Exit.]

Re-enter TITINIUS, with MESSALA.

Mes. It is but change, Titinius; for Octavius
Is overthrown by noble Brutus' power,
As Cassius' legions are by Antony.

⁴ Cassius is now on a hill: he therefore means a hill somewhat *higher* than that he is on. — Cassius was, *in fact*, what we now call *near-sighted*.

⁵ Some *alight*, or *dismount*.

⁶ *Hilts*, plural, for *hilt* was the common usage in the Poet's time. So too with *funerals*, which occurs in this play.

⁷ It was a *dagger*, not a sword, that Cassius stabbed Cæsar with. But the same *weapon* is put for the same *owner*; a common figure of speech. The Poet represents this matter as he read it in *Plutarch*. In fact, however, Cassius was found with his head cut off; but Pindarus could nowhere be found; and it was thought by many that he had treacherously slain his patron.

Tit. These tidings will well comfort Cassius.

Mes. Where did you leave him?

Tit. All disconsolate,

With Pindarus his bondman, on this hill.

Mes. Is not that he that lies upon the ground?

Tit. He lies not like the living. O my heart!

Mes. Is not that he?

Tit. No, this was he, Messala,

But Cassius is no more. — O, setting Sun,

As in thy red rays thou dost sink to night,

So in his red blood Cassius' day is set;

The sun of Rome is set! Our day is gone;

Clouds, dews, and dangers come; our deeds are done!

Mistrust of my success hath done this deed.

Mes. Mistrust of good success hath done this deed.

O, hateful Error, Melancholy's child!

Why dost thou show to the apt thoughts of men

The things that are not? O Error, soon conceiv'd,

Thou never com'st unto a happy birth,

But kill'st the mother that engender'd thee!*

Tit. What, Pindarus! where art thou, Pindarus?

Mes. Seek him, Titinius, whilst I go to meet

The noble Brutus, thrusting this report

Into his ears: I may say, thrusting it;

For piercing steel and darts envenomed

Shall be as welcome to the ears of Brutus

As tidings of this sight.

Tit. Hie you, Messala,

And I will seek for Pindarus the while. — [*Exit MESSALA.*

Why didst thou send me forth, brave Cassius?

Did I not meet thy friends? and did not they

Put on my brows this wreath of victory,

And bid me give it thee? Didst thou not hear their shouts?

Alas, thou hast misconstru'd every thing!

But, hold thee, take this garland on thy brow:

Thy Brutus bid me give it thee, and I

Will do his bidding. — Brutus, come apace,

And see how I regarded Caius Cassius. —

By your leave, gods: — this is a Roman's part:

Come, Cassius' sword, and find Titinius' heart.

[*Dies.*

Alarum. *Re-enter MESSALA, with BRUTUS, young CATO, STRATO, VOLUMNIVS, and LUCILIUS.*

Bru. Where, where, Messala, doth his body lie?

* Cassius is said to have been of a highly choleric or bilious temperament; as such predisposed to melancholy, and hence apt to be taken with imaginary evils, or to construe things to the worst.

Mes. Lo, yonder, and Titinius mourning it.

Bru. Titinius' face is upward.

Cato. He is slain.

Bru. O, Julius Cæsar, thou art mighty yet!
Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords
In our own proper entrails.⁹

[*Low Alarums.*]

Cato. Brave Titinius!

Look, wher he have not crown'd dead Cassius!

Bru. Are yet two Romans living such as these?—
Thou last of all the Romans, fare thee well!

It is impossible that ever Rome
Should breed thy fellow.— Friends, I owe more tears
To this dead man than you shall see me pay.—
I shall find time, Cassius, I shall find time.—

Come, therefore, and to Thassos send his body:
His funerals shall not be in our camp,

Lest it discomfort us.— Lucilius, come;—

And come, young Cato;— let us to the field.—

Labeo and Flavius,¹⁰ set our battles on:—

'Tis three o'clock; and, Romans, yet ere night

We shall try fortune in a second fight.¹¹

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *The Same. Another Part of the Field.*

Alarum. Enter, fighting, Soldiers of both Armies; then
BRUTUS, CATO, LUCILIUS, and Others.

Bru. Yet, countrymen, O, yet hold up your heads!

Cato. What bastard doth not? Who will go with me?

I will proclaim my name about the field.—

I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho!

A foe to tyrants, and my country's friend;

I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho! [*Charges the Enemy.*]

Bru. And I am Brutus, Marcus Brutus, I;

Brutus, my country's friend: know me for Brutus.

[*Exit, charging the Enemy. CATO is overpowered, and falls.*]

Lucil. O, young and noble Cato, art thou down?

⁹ Brutus here strikes, I take it, the proper key-note of the play. It is said that every one of the conspirators met with a violent death, either by his own hand or by another's.

¹⁰ These two men are not named among the persons of the drama, because they speak nothing. Labeo was one of the stabbers of Cæsar; and it is related that when he saw that all was lost, having dug his own grave, he enfranchised a slave, and then thrust a weapon into his hand to kill him.

¹¹ The Poet very judiciously represents both battles as occurring the same day. They were in fact separated by an interval of twenty days.

Why, now thou diest as bravely as Titinius,
And may'st be honour'd, being Cato's son.

1 *Sold.* Yield, or thou diest.

Lucil.

Only I yield to die :

There is so much that thou wilt kill me straight.

[*Offering Money.*]

Kill Brutus, and be honour'd in his death.

1 *Sold.* We must not. — A noble prisoner !

2 *Sold.* Room, ho ! Tell Antony Brutus is ta'en.

1 *Sold.* I'll tell the news. — Here comes the General. —

Enter ANTONY.

Brutus is ta'en, Brutus is ta'en, my lord.

Ant. Where is he ?

Lucil. Safe, Antony ; Brutus is safe enough :

I dare assure thee that no enemy

Shall ever take alive the noble Brutus :

The gods defend him from so great a shame !

When you do find him, or alive or dead,

He will be found like Brutus, like himself.

Ant. This is not Brutus, friend ; but I assure you,

A prize no less in worth. Keep this man safe,

Give him all kindness : I had rather have

Such men my friends than enemies. Go on,

And see whe'r Brutus be alive or dead ;

And bring us word unto Octavius' tent

How every thing is chanc'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *The Same. Another Part of the Field.*

Enter BRUTUS, DARDANIUS, CLITUS, STRATO, and VOLUMNIUS.

Bru. Come, poor remains of friends, rest on this rock.

Cl. Statilius show'd the torch-light ; but, my lord,

He came not back : he is or ta'en or slain.¹

Bru. Sit thee down, Clitus : slaying is the word ;

It is a deed in fashion. Hark thee, Clitus. [*Whispering.*]

Cl. What, I, my lord ? No, not for all the world.

Bru. Peace then ! no words.

Cl.

I'll rather kill myself.

¹ This is hardly intelligible without the passage it was founded on 'Brutus thought there were not many of his men slain ; and, to know the truth of it, one called Statilius promised to go through the enemies, and, if all were well, to lift up a torch-light in the air, and then return with speed to him. The torch-light was lift up as he had promised. But his evil fortune was such that, as he came back, he fell into the enemies' hands and was slain.'

Bru. Hark thee, Dardanius. [*Whispers him.*

Dar. Shall I do such a deed?

Cl. O Dardanius!

Dar. O Clitus!

Cl. What ill request did Brutus make to thee?

Dar. To kill him, Clitus. Look, he meditates.

Cl. Now is that noble vessel full of grief,
That it runs over even at his eyes.

Bru. Come hither, good Volumnius; list a word.

Vol. What says my lord?

Bru. Why, this, Volumnius:

The ghost of Cæsar hath appear'd to me
Two several times by night; at Sardis once,
And, this last night, here in Philippi fields:
I know my hour is come.²

Vol. Not so, my lord.

Bru. Nay, I am sure it is, Volumnius.

Thou seest the world, Volumnius, how it goes;
Our enemies have beat us to the pit: [*Low Alarums.*

It is more worthy to leap in ourselves,
Than tarry till they push us. Good Volumnius,
Thou know'st that we two went to school together:
Even for that our love of old, I pr'ythee,
Hold thou my sword-hilts, whilst I run on it.

Vol. That's not an office for a friend, my lord.

[*Alarums still.*

Cl. Fly, fly, my lord! there is no tarrying here.

Bru. Farewell to you;—and you;—and you, Volumnius.—
Strato, thou hast been all this while asleep;
Farewell to thee, too, Strato.—Countrymen,
My heart doth joy, that yet in all my life
I found no man but he was true to me.
I shall have glory by this losing day,
More than Octavius and Mark Antony
By this vile conquest shall attain unto.
So, fare you well at once; for Brutus' tongue
Hath almost ended his life's history:
Night hangs upon mine eyes; my bones would rest,
That have but labour'd to attain this hour.

[*Alarums. Cry within, Fly, fly, fly!*

² So the Poet read in *Plutarch*: "Brutus being neare unto the city of Philippos, this spirit appeared againe unto him, but spake never a word. Thereupon Brutus, knowing that he should die, did put himselfe to all hazard in battel." Merivale has a strong sentence on the point: "The legend that when preparing for the encounter with the triumvirs he was visited by the ghost of Cæsar, which summoned him to meet again at Philippi, marks the conviction of the ancients that in the crisis of his fate he was stung by guilty remorse, and haunted by the presentiment of final retribution."

Cl. Fly, my lord, fly!

Bru.

Hence! I will follow.³ —

[*Exeunt CLIT. DARDAN. and VOLUM.*]

I pr'ythee, Strato, stay thou by thy lord.

Thou art a fellow of a good respect;⁴

Thy life hath had some smack of honour in it:

Hold, then, my sword, and turn away thy face,

While I do run upon it. Wilt thou, Strato?

Str. Give me your hand first: fare you well, my lord.

Bru. Farewell, good Strato. — Cæsar, now be still:

I kill'd not thee with half so good a will.

[*He runs on his Sword and dies.*]

Alarum. Retreat. Enter OCTAVIUS, ANTONY, MESSALA, LUCILIUS, and Army.

Oct. What man is that?

Mes. My master's man. — Strato, where is thy master?

Str. Free from the bondage you are in, Messala:

The conquerors can but make a fire of him;

For Brutus only overcame himself,

And no man else hath honour by his death.

Lucil. So Brutus should be found. — I thank thee, Brutus, That thou hast prov'd Lucilius' saying true.

Oct. All that serv'd Brutus, I will entertain them.⁵ —

Fellow, wilt thou bestow thy time with me?

Str. Ay, if Messala will prefer me to you.⁶

Oct. Do so, good Messala.

Mes. How died my master, Strato?

Str. I held the sword, and he did run on it.

Mes. Octavius, then take him to follow thee, That did the latest service to my master.

Ant. This was the noblest Roman of them all:

All the conspirators, save only he,

Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar;

He only, in a general-honest thought

And common good to all, made one of them.⁷

His life was gentle; and the elements

So mix'd in him,⁸ that Nature might stand up

³ Plutarch gives it, that Brutus, when urged to fly, replied, — "We must fly indeed, but it must be with our hands, not with our feet."

⁴ A fellow well *esteemed* or of good *reputation*.

⁵ Receive them into my service.

⁶ To *prefer* seems to have been the general term for *recommending* a servant. See page 119, note 16.

⁷ It has been plausibly proposed to read "thought of common good." Such changes are not rightly admissible. The force of *is* is continued over *common good*.

⁸ Referring to the old doctrine of the four elements, as they were called, earth, water, air, and fire, the right mixing and tempering of which was

And say to all the world, *This was a man!*

Oct. According to his virtue let us use him,
With all respect and rites of burial.

Within my tent his bones to-night shall lie,

Most like a soldier, order'd honourably. —

So, call the field to rest; and let's away,

To part the glories of this happy day.

[*Exeunt.*]

supposed to be the principle of all excellence in Nature. The Poet has a number of allusions to the doctrine, which was a commonplace of the time. See page 195, note 2. The sense of the word *elements* has so changed as to make the passage just as true to the ideas of our time, as it was to those of three hundred years ago. A rather curious fact.

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